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No. VI.

THE

CHURCHMAN'S REMEMBRANCER:

BEING A

COLLECTION

OF

SCARCE AND VALUABLE TRACTS

IN DEFENCE OF THE

DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE

Church of England.

Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing.—Job, viii. 8, 9.

Ο παλαιος χρηστοτερος εστιν. Luc. v. 39.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR THE EDITORS;

And sold by F. C. and J. Rivington, St. Paul's Church-yard; Hatchard, Piccadilly; Deighton Cambridge; and Hanwell and Parker, Oxford.

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PRINTED BY T. C. HANSARD, PETERBOROUGH COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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THE FAITH AND PRACTICE OF A CHURCH OF ENGLAND-MAN.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the following excellent little Tract, was Dr. WILLIAM STANLEY, a man eminently distinguished by his literary attainments, and by the active exercise of those dispositions which reflect the highest lustre on the Christian character.

Dr. Stanley was son of William Stanley, Gent. of Hinckley in Leicestershire; was educated at Ashley in Lancashire, and in the year 1663, at the age of sixteen, was sent to St. John's, Cambridge, of which college Bishop Beveridge, who married his Aunt, was a member. In 1669 he was elected Fellow of Corpus Christi College, on the joint recommendation of his Tutor, and Bishop Gunning, then Master of St. John's. He was ordained Priest by Bishop Compton in 1672, became an University Preacher in 1676, and commenced B. D. in 1678.

From the University he removed to the Curacy of Much-Hadham, in Hertfordshire, that eminent Divine, Dr. Goodman, being then Rector; and he was soon after presented by the Earl of Essex to the Rectory of Raine-Parva,

in

in Essex. This living he resigned in 1682, for St. Mary Magdalen, in Old Fish-Street, London; which he also quitted in 1690, on being collated by Bishop Compton to the Rectory of Much-Hadham, void by the death of his friend Dr. Goodman. In 1684 he was collated to the Prebend of Cadington Major, in St. Paul's Cathedral; in 1689, became Canon Residentiary of St. Paul's; in 1691-2, was promoted to the Archdeaconry of London, on Dr. Tenison's removal to the Bishopric of Lincoln; and in 1706 was advanced by his Uncle Bishop Beveridge, to the Deanry of St. Asaph, which dignity he retained till his death, in October 1731, in the 85th year of his age. He was buried in the vaulting of St. Paul's Cathedral, under the South wing of the Choir, among his old Friends, Bishop Beveridge, Dean Sherlock, Dean Younger, Dr. Holder, and Sir Christopher Wren. He was married to Mary, second daughter of Sir Francis Pemberton, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas and King's Bench, by whom he had three sons, William, Francis, and Thomas.*

* William, the eldest son, was Official of the Archdeaconry of London. Francis, the second, was Fellow of C.C.C. Cambridge, and afterwards Vicar of St. Leonard, Shoreditch, till his father resigned to him the Rectory of Hadham, in 1723; "a person," says the Dean's Biographer, "in every respect worthy to be his Successor." Thomas, the youngest, died at an earlier age.

About

About the year 1687, or earlier, Dr. Stanley was chosen to be Chaplain to the Princess of Orange, at the Hague, upon the dismission of Dr. Covel; a clergyman of unexceptionable character being by express orders sent for from Holland, to attend upon her Highness, the Bishop of London had it in charge to recommend two persons to the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was to approve finally of one of them. The two thus recommended were Dr. Burnet, Master of the Charterhouse, and our Author; the latter of whom was appointed, and (as it is conjectured) was at the same time favoured by his Grace with his Faculty for a Doctor of Divinity's degree. He was much esteemed by the Princess, who, on her advancement to the throne, promoted him to be Clerk of the Closet, bestowed several other favours upon him, and made him one or two offers of episcopal dignity, which, however, he declined.

On the death of the learned Dr. Spencer he was elected (without his knowledge) to the Mastership of Corpus Christi College; which at first he refused; but on being strongly solicited by the unanimous voice of the College, for the sake of preventing dissentions in the society, he consented to accept it. On his being elected Vice-Chancellor, the University passed an extraordinary Grace to admit him to the Degree

of

of D.D. with all its academical privileges, to which the archiepiscopal Faculty could not entitle him.

In the year 1698, he resigned the Mastership of the College, finding it to be incompatible with his other duties. But during his continuance there, he employed himself in making a catalogue of the valuable Manuscript Library bequeathed to the College by Archbishop Parker, which he afterwards printed at his own expence, in folio, Lond. 1722, a very elaborate and important work. He also presented the College with a set of silver gilt Communion Plate, which had belonged to queen Mary's private chapel, when she was princess of Orange, and which she had given to Dr. S. on her coming to the Crown of England, as a memorial of her favour and esteem.

Many extensive and important benefactions are recorded of Dr. Stanley, and many excellent designs in which he was actively concerned. In the year 1698, he exerted himself to forward the printing of an Edition of the *Councils* with *Protestant* annotations, not only subscribing to the work, but obtaining, by his interest at court, a grant to import what paper should be wanting for it, *Custom-free*. The care and management of the work were committed to Dr. Allix; but it was afterwards laid aside. When Dean of St. Asaph,

Asaph, Dr. S. procured, at his sole expence, an act of Parliament to annex certain prebends and sinecures to the bishopricks of Bangor, Llandaff, St. David's, and St. Asaph, in order to relieve the widows and orphans of the Welsh Clergy, from paying mortuaries to the bishops on the death of every incumbent within their respective dioceses and jurisdictions. He also rebuilt the larger part of his deanery house; settled a leasehold estate on a charity school in St. Asaph, and joined in augmenting the perpetual curacy of St. George in its neighbourhood. His gifts towards the augmentation of small livings, in aid of Queen Anne's Bounty, were extended to different parts of the kingdom, as may be seen in Ecton's List. Several other instances of his truly liberal and well-directed munificence might be mentioned; nor ought it to be omitted, that he was a zealous promoter of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, and first moved Archbishop Tenison and Bishop Compton to obtain for it the Royal Charter. See Humphrey's Historical Account of the Society, p. 12.

The foregoing account of Dean Stanley's life is little more than an abridged statement of what is related of him in Mr. Masters's History of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. It exhibits to us, however, some striking features of a man

man who may justly be said to have been an ornament to his profession; being constantly occupied in works of Piety, Charity, and Learning, peculiarly befitting his dignified station in the Church, and exemplifying in his conduct, no less than inculcating in his writings, the genuine principles of the Christian character, so well set forth in his "*Faith and Practice of a Church of England-Man.*"

From the same authority the following account of his literary labours is also extracted.

Dr. Stanley published but few things. He began early to take a share with the London Clergy in the *Popish Controversy*, but was probably prevented from going on with them, by his appointment in Holland. He was concerned also, before he went abroad, with several learned divines, in a scheme for printing an *English Bible*, with a plain and practical *Commentary*: The *Minor Prophets* were to have been assigned to him. But the plan was afterwards laid aside. Its failure is much to be regretted; a work of such a kind, executed on the pure and genuine principles of the Church of England, being still a most important *desideratum*.

Dr. Stanley published with his name, a Sermon on Coloss. ii. 5. preached Jan. 10, 1691-2, in Lambeth Chapel, on the Consecration of Dr. Tenison,

Tenison, Bp. of Lincoln, in which the necessity of maintaining the true *Faith*, against all heretical opinions, and the *Order* of the Church, against Schismatics and Separatists, is insisted upon in a plain and forcible manner, and with sound discretion. He published also a Sermon on Matth. ix. 37, 38, preached Feb. 20, 1707-8, before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel: and is said to have printed another Sermon, to recommend a public Collection for the *Redemption of Captives.*

The Editors of the Bodleian Catalogue, have ascribed to him, says Mr. Masters, *the Romish Horseleech*, concerning *the intolerable Charge of Popery to this Nation*, which came out so early as 1674. But Mr. M. suspects this to be a mistake; and, indeed, the work is now universally given to Mr. Stavely.

Of two other anonymous publications he is known certainly to have been the Author: the one, concerning *the Devotions of the Church of Rome, wherein they are compared with those of the Church of England*, 4to. Lond. 1685; the other, intitled *the Faith and Practice of a Church of England-Man*,* a work so well received on its

* Mr. Masters assigns to this piece the date of 1706, evidently taking it from one of the latest Editions, for the *fourth* Edition, in Sion College, is dated 1692; and the *third*, from which the present is reprinted, bears the date of 1688.

first

first appearance as to have reached a third edition in little more than six months.

The Editors deem it unnecessary to add more than earnestly to recommend the last mentioned Tract, which is here re-published, to general perusal; in a full persuasion that it will be found admirably adapted to confirm and strengthen, in all who give it due attention, the soundest principles of Church-Government, the pure doctrines of the Christian Faith, and that consistent regard to Christian Obedience, with respect both to Doctrine and Discipline, which are the genuine characteristics of a faithful Son of the Church of England.

May 29, 1807.

THE

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CHAP. I.

Of the Church.

SAINT PETER, 1 *Pet.* 3. 15. *Bids us to sanctifie the Lord God in our hearts, and to be ready always to give an answer to every one that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us, with meekness and fear.* And therefore it can never be improper, or unseasonable for the most private Man to give an account of Himself, of his Belief, and Practice, especially in a time when Religion is so much controverted; that he may be corrected by others, if he be in any mistake, (which I call God to witness, in my Case, is not wilful) or if he be in the right, that he may at least by this example, do some good in the World, and provoke others to an Imitation.

I do therefore freely own, that I am not only a Christian at large, who Believes Christ to be come, and the Gospel to be the Word of God, and Rule of Men, and content my self with a silent Belief of This: But I look on my self as a Member of his Church, his Body, being admitted into it by Baptism, and enjoying singu-

lar privileges and advantages by it, as having a right to all the benefits which he purchased to his Church, and a share in all the Prayers that are made for it. This Church or generality of Christians hath several parts, some of which are more pure, some more corrupt; yet all that hold the essentials of Religion, I esteem to be of it. And though it be spread over the whole World, yet I look on it but as *One*, Christ himself speaking of his Church but as *one*; and accordingly I profess it in my *Creed*. And I think it ought to be but *one;* for the several parts of it ought not only to believe the same Articles of Faith, but as far as is possible to maintain the same Government, and keep up the same outward Order and Administration of affairs: That so, whosoever sees them, may know them to be the same kind of men, though scattered into several Countries. And they ought to keep up Union not only with one another, but especially with the First and Purest Ages of Christianity. For the Unity of the Church seems to require that we should endeavour as much to keep up Unity with the First Christians, though we live so long after them in time, as if we had lived at the same time with them, but far distant from them as to place. And all the Members of the Catholick or Universal Church ought to be more *one*, to have a better

better agreement among themselves, a closer correspondence and connexion, and a greater concern one for another, than the *Mahometans* have one for another, who profess the same Religion; or than the Philosophers of the same Sect have, who hold the same Opinions.

And for my part I do what I can to keep up the Unity of it, by professing Christ openly with *this Church*, which is so pure a part or member of it.

And indeed, next to the sending of our Saviour into the world, I reckon my self bound for ever to thank God, that by his All-wise, and over-ruling Providence, he was pleased to order me to be Born in *England*, and to be Baptized there, and admitted into that part of his Church, which is there by Law established, and which I do verily believe to be in all particulars, the Truest, and most Sincere part of the Catholick Church on earth.

Now by the Church of *England*, I understand that Body of Men, who, as to Church-affairs, are United together, under the same principal Church Officers, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons; and Communicate with them, and with one another, in all Religious Offices, according to the Liturgy, and Orders of our Church; profess the Christian Faith according to the Ancient Creeds, and the Thirty Nine Articles, and are

governed according to the Canons and Laws of this Church.

And this Church, thus Framed, and Governed, (as far as I can judge) I find to be very consonant to the Scriptures, and in all material Points to be exactly correspondent to the Primitive Church, in its greatest Purity, *viz.* under and presently after the Apostles.

For it hath not only a subordination of Officers, which is necessary in all Regular Governments whatsoever; but it hath the same Officers, Bishops, and Priests, both in Name, and Authority, which seem spoken of in Scripture, which this Church always had, and all Churches that I can read of, ever had till of late, and the Church-Government that best agrees with a Monarchy in the State.

And whatever other men do, I esteem it not a light matter, what Church-Government is among us, if it were only for this, that this Church-Government hath been so universally received by all that own themselves Christians, from all Antiquity; I may justly think there was some necessity of such an Institution at first, and fear varying from such an Order, as not being able to discern perhaps all the ill Consequences of altering it.

But I find also that all other Nations, and particularly our own, were Converted under this Minis-

Ministration. That this is the way by which many good men have gone to Heaven; the Principal of the Martyrs of the ancient Church, as well as of our own, having been its Bishops. And by the going but in the way that so many good men have gone, I may hope sooner to meet Christ, than in a by-way of my own Invention.

And I find also this Church not only to be governed by the same Governors, by which the ancient Church was governed, but also to have the same general Laws, and to execute the same kind of Orders (only where the Times will not give leave, or where there is a just Power in our Church to change, or good Reason to vary) and to be the same way consistent with Monarchy and subservient to it, and to the Peace of the State by it. Besides, that it is the best way, according to Human Prudence, to keep out Heresy, or Schism, and preserve Union between the Members of the same Profession.

And lastly, I admire this Government, and Institution, because under it I am in no doubt of the Validity of the Ordinations of our Ministers, or of the Validity of the Sacraments by them administred. For we have our Orders by a continued Succession from the Ancients, and so from the Apostles, which is the only ordinary way

way, that I know of, for a man to be Commissionated to act in Christ's Name.

And therefore, for one of our Nation, and born within the Pale of our Church, to separate himself from us, either from dislike of Episcopacy, or on pretence of greater Purity, I must needs think to be a very dangerous practice. For I no more doubt there is such a sin as *Schism*, than I doubt there is such a sin as *Murder*.

Further, I cannot but admire at the want of Understanding (to say no worse) of those men who have endeavoured of late Years to run down Episcopacy in general, as Popish, seeing it is very evident, that Episcopacy was from the very beginning of Christianity, and many Ages before Popery, as by it are meant the Errours of the Church of *Rome*. And if it must be called Popish, because the Papists have such as they call Bishops; for the same Reason a Man may call the Creed Popish, because the Papists use, and profess it; and a man may call all the Greek and other numerous Eastern Christian Churches Popish, though in so many Points of Doctrine they are so contrary to the Church of *Rome*; But they agree with us in every considerable Point of Doctrine, as well as in Episcopal Government; And this by a continued Succession

cession from the first Ages, which is also another very strong Argument on our side.

Indeed it is so far from being true, that Episcopacy is a Branch, or a note of Popery, that I look on Episcopal Government, as the best way to keep out Popery, or any other Error. For Episcopacy, as established in its Just Rights, and Power, utterly destroys the Papal Pretences; For this will bring the Bishop of *Rome* to his former state, when he was looked on as no way differing from other Bishops, but only as he was Bishop of a bigger City, and had a larger Diocese. And the *Pope's* Creatures were so aware of this, that in the Council of *Trent*, when the *Spanish* Bishops would have enacted Episcopacy to be of Divine Right, the *Italians*, the *Pope*'s Creatures, presently smelt out the Consequences of it, *viz.* That This would be to depress the *Pope* himself to the same Level with other Bishops, and therefore made all the Interest they could that That Vote should not pass, and accordingly it was cast out. And therefore I must look on the Pope as a greater Enemy to Episcopacy, than even Presbytery it self. For Master *Calvin* himself did approve of Episcopacy; only it could not so well be brought into *Geneva*, where there was a Popish Bishop living, who was Lord of that City. But the Pope will allow of no Bishops, in proper speaking,

ing, but only himself; all Bishops deriving their Power from Him, He being the Head, and Root of Episcopal Power, as *Cajetan* hath determined; And all Bishops acting only with his Leave, and by his Authority and Grace, swearing Obedience, and Homage to Him, as they do by the Oath which they must take when they are Consecrated; All this makes them only the Pope's Servants, and scarcely so good as his Deputies; To be sure, they are not properly Bishops in the true and ancient sense of it, as such who, under Christ, had over their Presbyters, and People, Supreme Power, as to Church Affairs, and Accountable only to Christ, and to a Council of their fellow-Bishops often meeting, and consulting together for the good of the whole.

And as Bishops in general are not Popish, so neither can our Bishops appointed and consecrated according to the Orders of the Church of *England*, be with any colour accused of Popery. For at their Ordination first, and Consecration afterwards, they all subscribe to the *XXXIX Articles*, to the use of the *Liturgy*, take the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and give all the caution, and security, that one man can give to another, of their Aversion to Popery, and steadiness to the Church of *England:* And now besides this, They take the *Test*, and renounce

nounce *Transubstantiation*, and the other great points of popery, and particularly disclaim all subjection to the Pope, or dependance on him, and this with abundance of Truth and Reason.

For if Christian Religion had been planted here from *Rome*, it doth not prove that we ought on that account for ever to depend on *Rome*, or our Bishops be subject to the pope. For we can prove that *Scotland*, some *parts of Germany*, and other places, received their Christianity from *England*; And yet, they will not allow us to challenge power over those places upon that account still in Spirituals. But it is evident that we did not so much as receive our Religion from any of the Bishops of *Rome*, but had it planted here, either by the Apostles, or Apostolical men, as is fully made out, especially of late, by those great and learned Members of our Church, Archbishop *Usher*, the Bishop of St. *Asaph*, and Dean of St. *Pauls*.

Indeed when Christianity was almost destroyed in the Eastern parts of this Island by the *Saxons*, who were Heathens, the Bishop of *Rome* sent *Augustin* to Convert some of those *Saxons*; but he found many Bishops in this Country, who altogether disowned any dependance on *Rome*; and would pay no Obedience to the Pope, professing they owed no more service to him,

him, than to any other good Bishop, and pious Christian. And moreover, we in *England* may justly plead the privilege of the Kingdom of *Cyprus*, according to the council of *Ephesus*, of being a distinct National Church, without Dependance on any other.

And as thus in point of *Right* we can justify our not being subject to *Rome*, so also in point of *Fact*, we can say, the Pope never had any settled, and quiet Possession, and exersise of Power here; at least for any considerable time together, as is at large evident from what Master *Prynn* and others have collected; and all our Statutes of *Provisor's* and *Præmunire's* do shew how little hold here the Pope was by our Government allowed, or owned to have. And though many did appeal to *Rome*, it was against Law; and therefore, That gives the Pope no more Right here, than many peoples being Traiterous, and paying Homage to an Usurper, doth annul the Right and Title of the Lawful Prince.

If the Pope ever had any Power here, it could not be by a Divine, but a Human Constitution, by the approbation of the King and Nation; and that very Power hath for good reasons annulled this Liberty, and revoked this Grant, and made it High Treason, or at least a *Præmunire*, to have any thing to do with the Pope, or See of *Rome*.

And

And what ever Reasons there ever could be for holding a friendly Correspondence with the Bishop of *Rome*, I am sure there were and are as good, or greater Reasons for denying it now, and forbidding all Appeals to *Rome*; not only by reason of the vast sums of Money drawn out of the Nation, (all great Ecclesiastical Causes being judged at a Foreign Tribunal, and all Ecclesiastical Persons made to depend on another Jurisdiction,) but also we having found by woeful experience how great an enemy the Pope was to our Peace, all Transactions with him were and are by our Laws most justly forbidden.

And therefore we being thus a Legally Constituted National Church, had consequently full power to Reform our selves, without asking the Bishop of *Rome*'s leave. (When we found many Errors by degrees crept in among us.) Nor can we with any shew of Reason, or Conscience, be charged with Schism on that account; for we are ready to justify to the World (as we have done it abundantly) that we have only cast off Errors, or such things as ought to be rejected, and have retained, or received, nothing but what is Necessary, or Lawful. And it is a hard case that we must be forced to ask the Pope's leave for us to grow better Christians; and it is yet a harder

harder case if he should be unwilling, and not suffer us so to be.

And one particular National Church cannot, without great impropriety, be so much as charged with Schism, from another National Church, such as that at *Rome* is, but from the Universal Church.—So that it is a kind of Nonsense for us even to be charged, with being Schismaticks from *Rome*, unless *Rome* be all the World, or a Particular be an Universal.

Ours is the National Religion; And for the first ten Years of Queen *Elizabeth*, the Papists did Communicate with us, till the Bull of Pope *Pius* the Fourth, *An.* 15^{69}_{70}, though our Reformation was then fully settled. So that *They* are bound to answer it, why they join not still in Communion with us. And I hold my self bound to Obey this Church in all its Lawful Commands, it having as much Power, as any other Church in the World, over its own Members, though it is less imperious in its Commands, and pretends not to a Dominion over our Faith.

And therefore most highly do I honour, and revere this Church, thus Apostolically Governed, and Legally Established, and of all things in this World, dread its Censures. For I cannot but reckon that those great Privileges, and Promises

Promises granted by Christ to his Church, *Matt.* 18. must belong to this Church, which is so truly Christian. And I am so far from slighting or despising its Authority, because it doth not so imperiously Curse its Enemies, or doth not pretend to inflict Temporal Punishments on Delinquents, that I revere it the more on this very account. For God will be never the less severe against a Rebellious Son, because the Father did only with Pity and Tenderness rebuke him, and desire to reclaim him. And it hath been of old observed, that where, and when the Church had less secular aid, there God did in a more special manner vindicate it himself.

As to the other subordinate parts of our Government under the Bishops, such as Arch-Deacons, Deans and Chapters, and the several Ecclesiastical Courts, I think none can deny, but either these very Orders, or somewhat like them, is necessary to the good of the whole, and the regular Administration of affairs under the Bishop; and these very Orders have been so long among us that they can plead the Prescription of so very many hundred years, and are so interwoven with our Laws, and the frame of our Government, and we have been so long used to them, that they have every way a firm, and settled Right among us; and nothing in this Life can be stable, nor right certain, if, to other Arguments,

guments, a Prescription of so many hundred years shall not be valid; for it is an Ancienter Right than any man can shew for his Estate: and for these Reasons do I fully approve of them. And whatever fault is in any of them, I must needs ascribe it to the Persons, and Abuses, rather than to the Nature of the Office. Much less can the Church be charged with blame, which, I am sure, by her Canons, designs the Preventing of all those abuses committed; and if the times at present will allow of no better, let every man bear his own burthen.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Of Christian Belief.

AND as I find *this Church thus rightly constituted*, and under a Government the most truly agreeable to the Apostolical pattern, and the Practice of all Ages: So I cannot but admire it more, if possible, for the soundness of its *Faith* and *Doctrine*.

For as it makes a true Faith necessary, as well as Practice; so it resolves this Faith into the true Author, and Object of it, God; It being most agreeable, that we should learn from Him, what to Believe of Him, and by what actions to please Him.

Now He hath, in his Goodness, ordered certain Books to be written, by Men inspired by Him, that do contain all that God would have us know, as from him, in order to our Salvation. And these Books all together we call the *Bible*, or *Holy Scriptures*. And this Book I am by the Church of *England* taught, to look on, as a compleat Rule of Faith and Manners; And that neither a Man's own private Spirit, or Reason,

nor

nor the Authority and Commands of any Men, ought to be listened or attended to, in opposition to it.

I reckon also that this Scripture is clear enough, as to all necessary points, to them that will make it their Business, without Prejudice, to consider, and understand it; And whatever hath been said against it, I find none, but only seeming Contradictions and Oppositions in it, which do allow of a very favourable Interpretation, and Reconciliation; And that even these seeming Difficulties, and Contradictions, as well as the divers Translations of Scripture, and the various Readings, are chiefly or only in small and indifferent cases, which concern not the Essence of our Religion. And to reconcile these seeming Oppositions, and to explain the whole, is a great part of the Office, and duty of the Clergy, the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, who are bound to instruct the People out of this Book, and to convince the Gainsayers.

And though, as St. Peter says, many do wrest the Scripture to their own destruction; yet I look on it as very fit and necessary, that this Scripture should be in the Vulgar Language, and often read by the People; That so, they themselves may see, and know the Law, by which they must be judged; that they may be satisfied the Clergy do not impose on them, and teach

teach them, a Religion of their own invention: and seeing every man must be judged at the last day severally by himself, and according to what he himself hath done; it seems necessary, that he should now first judge for himself, whatever help or assistance he may have from another, to make a right judgment.

And this sufficiency, and clearness of the Scripture, is the reason why I do not depend on the Authority or Credit of the Priest that expounds it, or preacheth from it, but on the Scripture it self; he being always bound to bring some clear passage of Scripture for the proof of what he saith. And therefore I do not look on any thing that he saith as infallible, any further than it is consonant to Scripture; nor do I reckon any infallible Interpreter, at all to be given to the Church. For if there were any infallible Interpreter of the Word, and Will of God, doubtless it would of all things, have been the most plainly said, and the most frequently referred to in Scripture, because of the Infinite use of knowing it, and the Danger of being Ignorant of it; and God in his wisdom and goodness, would never have put so many particulars into the Scripture, which there is no such need we should know.

And though it is true, that the *Church* did convey down to us the Books of Scripture, and

so we receive the Scripture *from the Church*, as some of the Fathers have said; yet it doth not hence follow, that the Scripture received its *Authority* from the Church, or that the Church is above the Scripture, and to be believed before it. For the Scripture received its Authority only from God, who Inspired those Men that wrote it; and the Church, in Conveying down the Scripture to us, is to be looked on only as a *witness* of such Books being written by Divinely inspired men, not as giving us those Books by its own *Authority*, to be received by us as Divinely inspired. For all that we need prove concerning the Scripture, is, that it was written by such and such men, and received as Divinely inspired. Now even Human Testimony is sufficient to prove this, without any Authority. And to argue for the necessity of *Infallibility*, or *Divine Authority* in the Church, to assure us which is the Scripture, is the same thing as if we would admit only of a King and Parliament's Testimony or Authority to prove, that such an Act of Parliament was formerly made. And therefore I may justly look on the Scripture as Infallible, though the Church that conveys it down to us, is Fallible. For otherwise, if the Church must be esteemed Infallible in every thing, because she conveys down to us the Scriptures, which all own to be Infallible; by the same reason

reason the Keeper of the Records of the *Tower*, or any where else, may urge that, his Word ought to go as far as any of those Records, because he hath the keeping of them. And therefore as I may believe the Records, but discredit the man; so I may believe the Scripture, though I believe not the Church. Besides, a man may tell one thing true, but lie in many others; so, the Church may be believed in handing down to us the Scripture, because it hath all collateral evidence to strengthen its Testimony, but yet need not be believed in every thing else, which she pretends to. Though the Church of *England* will disown nothing that can be proved to have been received and practised by the *whole Church*, from the Apostles days, such as the *Canon of Scripture*, the *keeping of the first day of the Week* holy, instead of the Seventh, *Infant-baptism*, *Episcopacy*, &c. but very strictly insists on them, because she reckons herself bound to keep up Unity with the first and purest Ages, and cannot think it probable, or possible, that an Universal practice, contrary to the design of Christ and his Apostles, should prevail immediately after, and even during the Apostles days.

But still we cannot allow of all things that the Church of *Rome* pretends an Universal, and constant Practice of; such as *Prayers to Saints*,

Prayers for the Dead, Transubstantiation, Adoration of the Host, Submission to the Pope's Supremacy, &c. For they notoriously falsify in their Quotations to this purpose, as any one will see that shall without prejudice, read their Books, and ours, written on these Subjects. Much less do we own any Infallibility of *Tradition*, or make what is delivered down to us by it, to be of equal Authority with the Scripture, as the Council of *Trent* expressly doth. For Christ hath no where told us, that he would deliver some things by word of mouth, to be handed down to all Ages, which shall be of the same Necessity, and Infallibility, with what is written in Scripture. Nor is there any Intimation of any man, or number of men's being so extraordinarily guided and assisted, as without Error to convey down to us this Oral tradition. And if they rely only on the General promises made to the whole Church, of Christ's being *by his Spirit present with it*, we see not why a small part of the whole Church, *viz.* those of the *Roman* Communion, should take this promise to it self, any more than the Reformed Western, or Eastern Churches, unless it can be proved that the *Italians* have better memories, or are honester men, and so fitter to convey down old Traditions to us, than the *Greeks* or others; which, I believe, will be a hard matter to prove.——Therefore

fore we both deny any Tradition to be of equal Authority with the Scripture, and especially we find no number of men fit for the handing down such a Tradition to us, if it were given at first. And yet much less can we rely on any certain number of men, telling us that This, or That is such Infallible Tradition, and think our selves bound to believe them, say they what they will. And yet this is plainly the case with the Church of *Rome* concerning Tradition: They are not so solicitous that we should in all things believe, and do as the ancient Church did, but as the present Church of *Rome* would have us: for they know that we appeal in all cases to the Ancient Primitive Church, and challenge to be judged by it. And they know also, that the Ancient Church hath believed, and acted otherwise in many particulars, than they now do. But all their stickling for Tradition is to this purpose, that they may but get this one little point, that Tradition is infallible, and that they are the only Conveyers of it; that is, that they are Infallible, and that consequently we must believe, and do in every thing, as they bid us. For nothing else is allowed for Tradition in the Church of *Rome*, but what the present Church says, and declares to be Tradition. And this being granted by us, there would be an end of all dispute. For then, they may teach us a new Religion,

Religion, a new Gospel, and say they have Tradition for it, and who can gainsay it, and so make us deny our old one, that Christ and the Apostles taught us: *But we have not so learned Christ.*

Besides, I confess, I see not any necessity of an Infallible Judge in the world. Nor hath God in his Providence been wanting to his Church, in not providing one, as some of the Church of *Rome* have blasphemously argued. For seeing he hath given us, in the Scripture, a Rule and Foundation to proceed on, and our own Reason to apply it to our selves, and make use of it to our own purposes, I see not why we may not make use of this Book for its purposes, as well as we make use of other Books, for other purposes. And why cannot God speak his will as plainly to be understood, as men can, and do daily? and if there be Truth delivered in Scripture, why should not all men be able to apprehend, and discover it, seeing Truth is but one, and reason is the same to all, and especially seeing we shall be judged, every man for himself, and by a God that knows our hearts, who sees with what sincerity of heart, or with what byass and ill inclination, we apply this Rule to ourselves.

Although if there were an Infallible Judge at *Rome*, according to their way of reasoning, it would not be much to the advantage of the Church, especially of us that live so far from

Rome.

Rome. For seeing I cannot hear the Pope himself speak, they must all be Infallible, that to the fourth or fifth hand perhaps, convey what he saith to me; for if any of these mistake, or wilfully deceive me, what must I do? Nay if I were at *Rome*, the Pope cannot be spoke to at all hours; for he takes state on himself sometimes, and sometimes hath the Gout, and other infirmities incident to old men, and doth not love to be disturbed by every one. And yet if I should speak with him, I perhaps should not be much the wiser. For to make a full use of such an Infallible Judge, we must be as infallible as he; for we may mistake him without an Infallible Spirit; and if he doth tell me true, and I do not apprehend, or receive it so, I am still in a bad case. And yet it is evident that the words of an Infallible Judge, or Interpreter may be mistaken. For our Blessed Saviour himself was misunderstood, both by the *Jews*, and by his Disciples sometimes. And what shall we say then of this pretended Infallible Judge on the *Seven Hills*, who is often a Man of the weakest Understanding, and not always of the greatest clearness of expression, and who doth not know truth himself? For sometimes he hath excused himself from judging in a case in Divinity, by alledging that *he was not bred a Divine*, and therefore did not understand the Question.

And

And yet methinks Knowledge is somewhat necessary in order to Infallibility. Besides, if a man should by chance, speak a very true sentence, but doth not know what it means, and therefore cannot explain it to me, I may easily mistake him, or apply what he saith, to an improper purpose. For words are ambiguous, and some men's notions are found to fit things so well, that they often take the one for the other. And yet if there be any need of this Infallible Judge, there will be constant need of him; it will not be enough for him to speak now and then in a General Council, but very often, or always to sit, and have application made to him, according to their own principles, and ways of arguing, because there are new Disputes, and Questions, and Heresies that are raised almost daily (for if the Pope can give any one standing Rule for resolving all Doubts, and defining Doctrines, we should be apt to think that God may have given this himself in Scripture: and this would spoil his Trade) and if a man hath not this Infallible Judge ready to resolve him, be he never so desirous of knowing truth, he may die in Heresy, and his case then must be very bad, so that there is an absolute necessity of a man's living very near the Pope, or else he can have no tolerable security of himself, but he may be in some considerable error. And the People of *Rome* must be the

the only happy people in this life, that only are sure of the true Catholick Religion, as living so under the constant droppings of Infallibility. And yet I believe *Rome* is the last place in the world to which the Priest would send you, to make you a good Catholick. But how if it happen after all this, that this old Gentleman at *Rome*, *dare* not speak even what he thinks, for fear of angering this, or that party, *French*, or *Spanish*? or when a question is put to him, as *concerning the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin*, He sees that if he determine it either way, he shall lose, or at least disoblige a very powerful and numerous Order, and therefore useth all the tricks of Tergiversation, and delay that can be, that he may not be forced to decide the Controversy; as we know it happened within these seventy years? If this Gentleman did know more than other men, what would his knowledge signify if he be afraid to own or declare what he knows? Therefore let them decide their own Controversies first, by this their infallible Judge, before they pretend to impose him upon us. Will any man believe me that I have an Infallible Cure for the Gout, when he sees me lie groaning under it all the year round? And therefore not till they have determined among themselves the question of the *Immaculate Conception*, of the *Power of the Pope* besides

or

or without Council, and convinced the *French* King, and Clergy of the *Pope's Infallibility*, and absolute *unlimited Authority*, and of the *nullity of the Liberties* of the *Gallican* Church, shall we ever think they believe themselves, when they say the Pope is infallible; or if He be, I am sure it is to as little purpose, as if He were not. So that *Infallibility* is only a long word to amuse People. It is down-right Force that doth all things in the Church of *Rome*; and as I dare say at this time it will be granted me, the King of *France's* Army signifies more, than the Pope's Infallibility, to the converting of his own Subjects to the *Romish* Faith.

And though we allow not of any Infallibility resident in any Man, or number of Men on Earth; yet we have as great a certainty of the Truth of our Religion, as the matter is capable of. We have all the Proofs of the Reality of our Blessed Saviour's appearing in the World, of the Apostles preaching according to his will, and committing to writing the substance of what they taught, in those Books which we call the New Testament; and we have all the Evidence of the Truth, and uncorruptness, and also of the Sense and Meaning of those Books, that we can expect, and that a matter of that nature will allow of; and I think no Man in his wits, will require more.

And

And according to this church also, I allow of the three Creeds, called by the names of the *Apostles*, *Nicene*, and *Athanasian* Creeds; both because they are consonant to, and the very substance of the Scriptures, as to the great Points of our Belief; and also for the antiquity of their composure, and the general assent and reception that they have found for so many ages in the Church of Christ. For I have a very great reverence for whatever can be proved very ancient in Religion, and to have been generally received by the Church; as we profess a wonderful respect for the four first general Councils, which Pope *Gregory* the first said he reverenced as the Four Evangelists. For by giving this attention to the ancients, we go the best way to keep our Religion the same, and also maintain Unity with them. So that if they were part of the true Church of Christ, so are we; and if it would have been our duty to have kept unity with them, if we had lived in the same Age with them, but in Countries remote from them; it is as much our Duty to preserve the same Unity with them, though we live so long after them, seeing we pretend to be Members of the same Body of Christ with them.

But though we allow thus of the ancient Creeds, yet we cannot approve of those Additions, which Pope *Pius* the Fourth had the confidence

dence to make to the *Nicene* Creed, according to the Definitions of the Council of *Trent*, where after the last words of the *Nicene* Creed, *I look for the Resurrection of the Body, and the Life of the World to come*, He adds these Points, "Of "Seven Sacraments properly so called; of a "proper and propitiatory sacrifice in the *Mass* "for quick and dead; of Transubstantiation; of "Communion in one kind; of Purgatory; of In- "vocation of Saints; of the Veneration of their Reliques; of the Veneration of the Ima- "ges of *Christ*, and the Blessed Virgin, and "other Saints; of Indulgences; Of the Church of "*Rome*, as Mother and Mistress of all Churches: "Concluding, that this is the true Catholick "Faith, out of which no man can be saved."

For these Articles are neither consonant to Scripture, nor Antiquity; they were added by an unjust, and illegal authority, after the Decrees of a pack'd Assembly of men; all the ancient Church, as well as the bigger, and better part of the modern Church, disowning them; that is, the Doctrines were first established by the Bishop of *Rome* and these Articles, pursuant to those Doctrines, were added to the Creed by the Bishop of *Rome*, and his Creatures, as if his conscience, and judgment were to be a model for all other men's. And yet to those Articles are the Clergy of *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, &c. bound

to

to subscribe, as well as to the Trinity itself, and the Incarnation of the Son of God, or his Resurrection from the Dead.

But *we* keep only to the Creeds themselves, without any additions. And for a right understanding them, and to prove them consonant to Scripture, and pure antiquity, we have several Books to help us, and especially that incomparable Exposition of the Apostles Creed, made by the most learned the late Bishop of *Chester*.

And these Creeds I not only fully *believe*, but I verily think it my Duty, and advantage to *profess* often, according to the Orders of our Church. For by so doing, I live in an actual profession of the Christian Faith, according to my Vow of Baptism. I keep a *Summary* of my Belief constantly in my head, and yet every Article is of great moment, if we mind the consequences of it. And whilst I keep but this Epitome of my Christian Faith present to my thoughts, I shall not so easily be seduced into any Error in belief, or practice, which is contrary to it.

I approve also of the Books of the *Apocrypha*, at least some of them, to be read for the instruction of the People, as a kind of comment on the Old Testament, or somewhat between the Old, and New Testament. For we find some kind of Dawnings of Christianity in them. But I am taught not to reckon them of equal Authority with

with the Scriptures, nor do we establish any Point of Doctrine on them, they having not been received by the *Jewish* Church before our Saviour's time as Divinely inspired, but were written after the sealing up of Prophecy under the Old Law, and before the Revelation of God's will by the Gospel. And they not having any Original Authority in themselves, as written by Prophets, it is impossible the Church should now give them the Authority of Divinely inspired Books, as the Council of *Trent* pretends to do. For the Church cannot make him a Prophet, that really was no Prophet, nor owned for such for many hundreds of Years.

CHAP. III.

Of Gospel-Obedience.

AND I find also that in this Church a good and holy life is as much urged, reckoned as necessary, and, I bless God, I think I can say, as much practised, as any where else in the World.

Indeed we confess that there is no man, that lives, and converseth in the world, but sinneth, *Christ* being the only Person without sin Original, and Actual. And that the very best things that we do, we are still in Truth and Justice, to account of our selves but as *unprofitable servants, and that we do but what it was our Duty to do.* And therefore we cannot think it possible for us to *merit* any thing, in strict Justice, at the hand of God, all the power and ability by which we do any thing of good, being of his giving. And therefore of the best of our Actions, we say with Saint *Paul*, they are of the *ability which God giveth.* But though a perfect unsinning obedience is not to be expected here, yet still we reckon that the best *Obedience* we can perform,

is necessary; that it is not sufficient for us to *believe*, Salvation being promised to such a Faith only, as is productive of *good Works*.

As to the concurence of God's grace, I reckon it absolutely necessary in order to my doing any thing as I ought. And though I cannot define to a point, just how far *God* works, and how far *we* work, in every good action, yet I am sure *I can do somewhat through God that strengthens me;* and I am sure also that *God worketh in me to will, and to do*, and that he will do more and more for me, accordingly as I make a good use of the Grace that he gives me, and pray to him for more strength, and therefore that I am somewhat active both in the using of Mercies, and in Praying for more Grace. And I am sure I answer all objections, and satisfy all difficulties, if I thus ascribe all the good that I do, to God assisting me, and take all my failings and weaknesses, to myself. And on this ground, as I shew my self the necessity of doing the best that I am able, and cut off all Plea of Merit for my self or others; so I shew also the necessity of Prayer to God for his Grace, and lay a Foundation for Thankfulness to him.

For now by the New Convenant, there is a strict obligation to all kind of Christian Duties, though there is allowance made for human frailties and infirmities. There is indeed a way made through

through the sufferings and merits of Christ for forgiveness on Repentance: But still it is more acceptable with God, that we live so, as far as it is possible, as to need no Repentance.

I reckon good Works therefore absolutely necessary, in order to Salvation; but that it is not so much the Actions themselves, as the Mind and Temper and Design which they are done with, or the Christian Principles which they proceed from, called *Faith* in Scripture, to which the worth of them is to be ascribed, and for which they are accepted of God through the Merits and Mediation of Christ.

The good Works which are required of us as Christians in the New Testament, and in the Ten Commands, or the Moral part of the Old Testament, all Duties and Virtues there commanded I reckon my self bound, as I am able, to perform; and all Sins or Actions there forbidden, I make Conscience to abstain from; and do not think that, by obeying one Command, I am free from others; or that because there are sins greater and less, yet that any are perfectly *Venial.*

I reckon my self bound also to obey the commands of my Lawful Governors, both in Church and State, not only for Peace, and Order sake, but for the sake of God who hath commanded me so to do; and am willing to

forego my own Right often, and deny my own profit, rather than disobey or oppose a Command of my lawful Governors, where I can obey them without sin. But I religiously abstain from setting up the Commands of men in opposition to the Commands of God, and cannot think that I shall be excusable, if I obey the Commands of men to the neglect of the Commands of God. And therefore, for Example sake, though I pay all deference and obedience to the Laws of the Church, as knowing that God hath bid me to obey it; yet I dare not do, as is done in the Church of *Rome*, when the Church commands me one thing, and the Law of God theugh contrary. As when they say, *God bids me obey the Church, and therefore it is all one which of the two I obey.* For God only bids me obey the Church in such cases as are not defined by the Laws of God, but doth not give the Church leave to command any thing contrary to God's Law, nor oblige me to attend to it, or obey it, if it should so command.

I thankfully own, and frequently commemorate the blessed Son of God's coming into the world, to die for us, and satisfy for our sins; but yet I think not, that he, by his sufferings, hath either excused me from obedience to God's commands, or exempted me from punishment, if I obstinately persevere in my disobedience.

For

For by Christ's coming, I am, if possible, more obliged to a good life, being now obliged to a stricter obedience, out of Love and kindness to him who hath done and suffered so much for me. And all his Commands are Laws, which are strictly to be obeyed by me; only there is now a provision made, that sincere and hearty obedience, though mingled with many imperfections (as it will always be whilst we live in these Houses of Clay) shall, for the sake of Christ, be looked on as if it were perfect, and our failings will, in Mercy, be forgiven, if we immediately repent us truly of them, and beg God's Pardon for them, and resolve for the future, by the assistance of God, to live better.

And therefore, I gratefully own the Doctrine of *Repentance*, and the hopes of Pardon on Repentance; but yet I think that it doth not at all encourage sin, nor is it to be looked on by us before we sin; only it is provided to prevent Despair when we have sinned, and there is no other Remedy. And it is a double affront to God, for me to sin out of hopes of Pardon on my Repentance. For by this means, I both break his Laws, and also abuse his Mercies; and the most severe Punishments are threatened to such a course.

And if the doctrine of Repentance, or of Pardon upon Repentance, will not give me any liberty

to sin, nor excuse me, if I sin wilfully; then, much less can I expect a dispensation from obedience to the Laws of God, any other way.

And by Repentance, I do not understand, only a bare *Confessing* that I have sinned, and sorrow for it, only out of fear of punishment, which they call *Attrition*; but reckon *Contrition* essential to Repentance, and necessary to the Pardon of my sins; *viz.* that I be heartily grieved for the heinousness of my sins in themselves, and their being so displeasing in the sight of God, and am fully purposed and resolved, by the blessing of God, to live better for the future; and also that neither by the power of the Priest, nor any other way, can this *Attrition* be turned into *Contrition*, or be sufficient for Repentance and Pardon.

I reckon that every good work done thus, by God's assistance, and with an honest mind, is well pleasing to God, and will, if we persevere, in due time have its reward. But this is to be ascribed to his own goodness, and the Merits of Christ, not to any worth or *merit* in the actions themselves. For how can a few good Actions, and mingled with many Failings, or a whole course of such Actions, for the little while that we live upon earth, bear any proportion to, much less deserve, eternal rewards in the world to come? especially, how can any man pretend to merit at his

his hands, by whose very aid and assistance, we do any thing that is good? For of the best of our Actions, we must in truth and justice say, as *David* said of his own, and his Prince's offerings, 1 Chron. 29. 14. *All things come of thee, and of thy own have we given to thee.*

I do not think that I do my duty sufficiently by abstaining from evil. For there are Affirmative, as well as Negative Commands; and if I only should *eschew Evil,* and not endeavour to *do good,* I must, according to the Tenor of the Gospel, be reckoned among the *unprofitable Servants.*

And in this consideration, I take care not only to avoid the sins, which I see many Christians too much indulge, or which I am, by Temper, Education, Custom, or Company, more than ordinary inclined to; but also I reckon it my indispensible duty, to be constant in all the parts of *Positive Christianity*; knowing that Heaven is not a state of silence, but infinite invaluable Happiness, and therefore, (which I cannot possibly think) can be gotten with the doing of nothing. And even among Men, there is little Commendation thought due to him, of whom the best that can be said, is, That *he hath done no harm.*

Now by *Positive Christianity*, or Affirmative Duties, I understand such things as I *actually do* out

out of Obedience to God, and to serve him; and not only *forbear* doing, what he forbids me.

So in reference to himself, I am so far from doing any thing to dishonour, or blaspheme God, that I every way, that I am able, seek to *glorify*, *praise*, and *serve* him,

In reference to my Neighbour, I not only forbear wronging him, but I do him all the good, by *good Advice*, by *speaking well* of him, by *aiding* and *assisting* him in any case, that I am able.

And as to myself, I think it not enough to lie on my Bed, and avoid the sins of *Intemperance*, &c; but that, by all the Diligence that I am able, I study to *Improve my Mind*, get a *Conquest over my Passions*, and every way work up my self to a better temper and practice.

I am so far from doing the World harm, or making it worse, that I endeavour to leave it, *better than* I found it. Hence I not only *practise Piety* constantly my self, but I do what I can to *Promote*, and *Encourage it* in others; which, if I am in a *Publick Station and Employment*, I can indeed do more effectually; and I am sure I shall be called to an account, why I do it not. And if I am in the most *Private Capacity* that can be, yet by my *silent, and constant Example*, I shall do some good; by my *Advice* to my Friends I may do more; and by *occasional Discourse*, or making use of such opportunities as will

will often present themselves, I may be an Instrument to a great deal of good, and all this, without being Conceited, or Pragmatical; without intrenching on other Mens business, going out of my own place, or disturbing the World.

I own a good and wise *Providence* watching over the World, and not only over *Publick*, but even extending to the most *Private* Affairs and Persons; and accordingly I daily commit my self, and all my Concerns to the Government and over ruling of that good God, that I am sure loves me, and knows my Case and Wants better than I do my self. But though I thus own a *Providence*, yet I take a Religious Care not to tempt God, by running my self into Evil, and then to expect God to keep me out, and deliver me. Just as though I know God's *Grace* to be All sufficient for me, yet I dare not expect it to keep me from sin, if I wilfully, and with my eyes open, run into it.

For God's *Grace* and *Protection* is promised, and to be expected only in such cases, as in which I have done all that was in me for my self, and then, I am allowed to hope for help from God; or in such cases as into which I am unwittingly and unwillingly led, or in which I am innocently and honestly engaged; and here, I am sure of suitable aid and support, if I humbly and earnestly

nestly make my Request, but not where I wilfully expose my self to Sin and Evil.

And on this Principle, I do not *Expose myself to Temptations*, either as to *Estate*, by *Gaming*, or as to *Life* by *Duels*, or as to *Religion*, and a *good Conscience*, by aiming only at the *lowest degree* of what is Virtuous or Commendable, or taking all the *Advantages* against Religion and my duty that I think, I possibly may; or by *going to Mass*, or any other Irregular way of Worship, though perhaps out of *vanity* only, and *Curiosity*, tempt God, and my self. For I know not but God may leave me when I thus dally with him. And the wise Son of *Syrac* says, *He that loves danger, shall fall into it.* And our Saviour, that we must not thus *Tempt the Lord our God.* For in all cases, in which the Interest of my Soul is concerned, I do nothing by Fancy or Humour; but with all the Judgment and Reason that I have, I consider seriously the Fitness, or Lawfulness of it, as knowing that it is here, as in War, where one Error is Fatal; and if I be taken off in a sinful Practice, there is no Rescuing me, or Retrieving me for ever.

As to a *share of the things of this life*, I keep my self in a great indifferency; for I am sure that life it self is not always Good, or a Blessing; and then, much less are any of these things very desirable, that serve only for the Con-

Conveniencies of Life. And seeing I never pray to God for my own, or my Friends longer Life, only as far forth as it shall be for the Glory of God, and good of Religion, and the World, or in order to our being the better fitted and prepared for Heaven; much less am I solicitous for more Estate, or make That, the subject of my Prayers. For I am sure that *every one* cannot have a great Estate; *few men* can bear or manage a great Estate as they ought; and *no man* needs it. And in the Lord's own prayer we are taught, and allowed only to pray for *Bread*, or what is necessary, and That, only from hand to mouth, *this day our daily bread.*

I am therefore well content with the little that I have, as thinking that God knows my strength and ability best, and what is properest for me, and as knowing that if I should get more, though by the most lawful means, and by the most moderate endeavours, it will be proportionably expected that I should do the more good, be the more useful in the world, and I shall have more Talents to answer for the Receipt of; as on the other hand, the less I have, the less Temptations I am liable to at present, the less tied I shall be to this world, and the less will be my account at the last day. And I am very sensible that when a Man comes to die, he will wish he had enjoyed less of this World;

World; there being at least some danger of *receiving our good things here.* And therefore though a great Estate may afford more ease and delight here, yet a mean fortune seems to afford more security, in order to hereafter. And hence I pray for such a Portion as is fittest for me, and with which I shall do most good; that God would suit my Condition to my Desires, or my Desires to my Condition, that I may serve him chearfully, and without Distraction. And I think not that I am out of the favour of God, or even of good men, because I have less than others; but do much condemn the unjust Measure of the world, of slighting a Man, because he is poor, or of valuing him for his Outside, rather than for his Inside. For Virtue and Prudence, Integrity and an earnest desire to do good are more true Accomplishments, than Beauty, Riches, Honours, *&c.* And He is the most considerable Man in the world, not that enjoys most of this world, but that doth most good in it; For him the world will most miss, for him good Mens Prayers are most, over him the Providence of God will watch in a more peculiar manner; and therefore, he is every way, the most valuable and considerable Person.

I am taught *to pray* at home in private always, and in my own Family too, constantly, especially if I have not the advantage of going with

with my Family to the Publick Service daily. But if I have the opportunity of Publick Worship, I am constant in it, as in all other Offices of Piety, and fear not being called an Hypocrite; for this is another of the unjust Measures of the world, to reckon a Man guilty of Hypocrisy, if he be more strict in Religion, and more scrupulous of a Sin, than others are; whereas true Piety must necessarily openly shew itself, and we are bid to *Let our Lights shine before men, that they may see our good works, and glorify God.*

And agreeable to this, I not only openly profess a strict Regard to *Justice*; but exactly practise it towards all men. I pay all men their Dues, all Officers and Offices in Church and State, according to St. *Paul*'s command, *Rom.* 13. I pay not only all honour and respect, but also all faithful service and obedience to the King, as God's Vice-gerent, and the common Father of the Country. I cannot endure to hear him ill spoken of, or hurt in his Reputation, or injured as to his just Rights, either in Power or Revenue.

And as to my Fellow Subjects, I maintain an exact justice, so as not only to forbear open Violence, Oppression, or Fraud towards any; but also to take care punctually to pay my Debts, and to answer all Promises and Obligations

tions. For not paying Debts is much the same thing as Robbing, or violently taking from another, there being but very little difference between taking Money from a Man when he is unwilling, and keeping it from him when he desires it, and ought in Justice to have it.

From this Principle, I am also punctual in paying my Tythes, and all such Publick Dues for the maintenance of Religion; and for my part take such care otherwise, that they that wait on the Service of God, and watch for my Soul, may have a handsome maintenance, lest by my niggardliness it should happen that the Service of God should be discouraged (and Religion will always suffer in the Ministers of it) or lest worthy Men should be disheartened from entering into the holy Office, or lest they that already serve at the Altar, should be forced to any unlawful, or any unbecoming means to maintain themselves; but that they may have advantages, and helps fit for their Improvement in Learning, that they may be able to defend Religion, and convince the Gainsayers. And this is no more than common Justice; for as they share not with others in secular Business and Trade, and other advantageous ways of raising themselves, so they ought to be provided with such a maintenance, as answers the ingenious

rious Education they have had, and the Relation they bear to Religion.

Finally, I consider my self as to all the Capacities and Relations, that I am in in the World, and endeavour to behave myself suitably to them, knowing there is a distinct Duty and Obligation between Father and Children, Husband and Wife, Superiors and Inferiors, Friends and Equals, and which therefore every Christian must take care to answer and perform: and which are very fully expressed, in that excellent Book of the *Whole Duty of Man.*

But much of this Nature will come to be considered also in the Sixth Chapter, under the Head of *Civil Conversation.*

CHAP. IV.

Of the Service of God in Publick.

I AM taught also in this Church, that it is not sufficient for me to *Believe* well, and to perform the Duty of a Christian by my self, or *in private*; but that there is a *publick Profession*, and an open exercise of several Acts of Religion, necessary.

For many Duties of Christianity do require the doing of them in Company; and it is an open Profession that doth most encourage Religion, and provoke other men to an imitation. And by the nature of the Publick Service which I frequent, and by my demeanour in it, I give a Sample of my self, and men may thence take an estimate how I am affected in my mind, and how I carry my self in my more private retirements. And I find in the Gospel, that Christ promiseth his Blessings especially to *Publick* Services, where *Two or Three are gathered together in his name*; and therefore, that it ought always to be preferred before Private. And *Publick*

lick Communion hath always been accounted necessary in order to our *letting our light shine before men*, and making the world know what opinion we are of. For the Publick Articles, and Confession of Faith of that Church with which I Communicate, being known to all the world, my Faith and Belief also, as to the main Articles of Religion, is known at the same time. But the excellency of Publick Service, and its Preference before Private, is fully made out, in that late excellent Treatise of Prayer by Dr. *Patrick*.

And for this reason also, I religiously abstain from Communicating with any Heretical or Schismatical Congregation; that is, with any that hold any erroneous opinion contrary to any of the great articles of Christianity, or that but keep private and separate meetings. from the Publick Worship that is Lawfully Established, lest I be reckoned of their party and persuasion. For all such separate meetings, are breaches of Charity; and though they may possibly encourage no Heretical opinions now, yet it is odds but such opinions, will find shelter and countenance among them. Such Clancular and irregular Conventicles being the proper Seed-plots for such weeds to grow in. They break the Unity of the body of Christ, and disobey Lawful Authority in the Church. And I am sure

sure that, if they can Communicate without sin, for them to separate, is a very great sin. Besides, that all such private meetings are dangerous to the State; for all men, that are ill-affected to the State, will herd with them, and so will be secure of a Party. And it weakens also the publick strength, when a number of men make themselves a distinct Party, who will be so far from joining heartily with the Publick, that they will reckon it their duty to oppose, and find fault with what is done, if it be but to give some excuse and countenance to their own Schism. And by thus finding fault with the Publick management, they will also draw all discontented people to them (who are always numerous in every State) and so, not only strengthen their *Schism* against the Church, but also form a dangerous *Faction* against the State.

And as I thus Conscientiously forbear the going to any *irregular unlawful* Assemblies, though only out of curiosity, because my very being there but once, and out of no bad design, is a giving them countenance and encouragement (for number and company is always encouraging) and is also a putting my self out of God's protection, by tempting him in running my self into evil and danger, which he may justly suffer me to fall into: So also, I am very scrupulous of leaving

leaving *my own Church* at all, or going to any other Church or *Regular Congregation.* For the thus running to other Churches, generally argues a vanity of mind; it is oft the Mother of Schism and Faction, and rather tends to advance popularity than true Religion; it gives a very bad Example, it discourageth my own Parish Congregation, and I do not think it is so likely to have a blessing from God. For God will give his blessing to us especially where he himself hath placed us, and in regular ways, he being the God of order, and not of Confusion. And I am sure I have at least as good Prayers, and the Word of God itself as pure, as I can find it in any other Church. And though it is possible I may hear a neater and more elegant Sermon there, yet besides that I do not think there is so much Religion, properly so called, in hearing Sermons, they being not so much in reference to God, as to our selves, and for our own benefit; I say besides this, if at my return home from such a Sermon, I sit down, and consider what I have gotten by my wandering, I shall find, that rather my curiosity, and fancy are gratified, than Piety and Devotion advanced in me, and that I am rather *pleased* than *instructed,* or made either *wiser,* or *better.*

And I keep constantly to my own Parish on all occasions, not only on Sundays, but other

days, setting down this for a Rule, that Prayers hinder no business. And if it should once happen that I should suffer a little by it, I am sure it will be abundantly recompensed some other way; though commonly there is no need of that; for so hath God in mercy ordered the world, and mens concerns in it, that a man may easily, at least, with a little forecast, so order all his Business, that there shall be time enough both for Publick and Private Devotion. Nay, indeed with most men, it is certain that I need desire them only to spend that time in Devotion or Reading, or in any other method in order to Heaven, which else they would be perfectly idle in, and would, as we say, hang on their hands, and which they are not obliged to spend in any necessary, or useful business of Life. So that the most diligent man of the world, and he that hath most Business, with a little contrivance, may find time enough for constant Devotion; and it will be a Relaxation, as well as Comfort to his mind, and will procure for him moreover a Blessing from God on his other, and secular business.

And when I come to the Publick Service, I come not out of custom, or to please others, or get a Reputation, or only with such a kind of disposition of mind, as when I make a visit to a Friend, or go to any common place and company.

pany. For when I come to Church, as I am going, I always think with myself, now am I going to appear before God in a more especial manner; and I reflect on some, or all the designs of a Publick Prayer and Service, and for which I go now, and at all other times. For I must always propound to my self, and design by this, and every other act of Publick Devotion, to *pay the Homage* due from me to my great Creator, and Benefactor, who hath thus commanded to be served, and acknowledged by me; *by Praises, to magnify and extol* him for his infinite perfections in himself; by *Thanksgivings, to thank and honour* him for the mercies already vouchsafed to all mankind, his Church in general, or this Church and Nation, as well as my self, in particular; and by my humble *Prayers and Supplications*, to beg a continuance of all the good things we enjoy, and a supply of those that we do or shall want, for my self, and others: as also by my *example*, as far as I can, to keep up, and encourage Religion and Piety in the World, and shew what Church and Profession I am of.

And my but thinking of these ends of my coming to Publick Service, will even awe me into a Devout and Reverent Carriage, and will make me attentive when I am there, and so to make a good use and application of all parts of Publick Service, to my proper occasions.

I always contrive to come before Prayers begin, both to shew my willingness, and desire to worship God, and that the Publick Service may not be discouraged for lack of Company, and lest I miss any part of Service, especially the first part, in which there is both the *Confession*, *Absolution* and the *Lord's Prayer*; and also that by my coming a little before Prayers begin, I may have some time to prepare myself, for what I am going to do.

In the first place, I fall down on my knees, to thank God for all his mercies, and particularly for this other opportunity of appearing before him, beseeching him to give a Blessing on all the Congregation, as well as on myself, that he will assist us in what we are about to do, and accept of what we shall do; Pardoning our Infirmities, and doing for ourselves, our Church, and Nation, abundantly more than we are able either to ask or think, for the sake of Jesus Christ that died for us.

When I am risen from my Private Prayers, and at all other times during Publick Service in the Church, I use as little *Ceremony to* others as possibly I can, (though I take care to be wanting in no part of civil Ceremony abroad in a common place.) For I reckon that the common Ceremonies of Bowing to one that comes in, or to a friend that I see in the Church, or to one that

that sneezeth, or on the like occasions, is a kind of Compliment that may very well and ought to be spared; for it doth not so well become the place where I am, nor the business I come about; it argues some kind of lightness of mind, or will create it, and is certainly distracting both to myself and others; and I may be sure that no man that considers the Sacredness of the place, and occasion, and that sees my Civility and Courteousness abroad, will ever think the worse of me, if I be more reserved, and less ceremonious at Church,

And all along the Service, I take care both to be Uncovered in token of respect, and to shew I consider the Majesty of him before whom I appear, and also to carry myself with all Gravity, Silence, and Inoffensiveness to others, neither by Talking, Gazing about, nor any light or unseemly carriage to be a disturbance to them; all indecency of carriage arguing a wandring mind, and is both unbecoming Religion, and a scandal to other men. Neither do I bring Dogs into the Church, or encourage those that are brought; very great unseemliness often following it, and it being at the best, and always a hindrance of composedness of Thought, a distraction of Devotion, and argues some Irreverence towards God.

While the *Exhortation* is Reading, I stand gravely, and mind seriously what is there said, and thereby more fit my self for all that is to follow, resolving by the blessing of God, to keep my thoughts so fixed on what I am going to do, and every part of Service, as the Worship of the great God, and the Salvation of my own Soul, do require.

At the *Confession*, with the Congregation, I fall down on my Knees, that being the posture injoined by the Church, and the humblest posture esteemed in these Countries. And I not only acknowledge my own sins, and the sins of the Church and Congregation in general, but as far as I am able, such particular sins of my own as are either greater in themselves, and of a more provoking nature, or else that having been lately committed, had not been so very particularly and fully Repented of by me. I am heartily sorry for them, and beg God's Pardon of them, that they may never rise up against me in this Life, if it be his will; but especially not in the other Life. And whilst I beg his Grace, that we may live Godly, Righteous, and sober Lives; at the same time, I resolve with my self, that by his Grace and Assistance, I will strive and endeavour to lead every way a better Life, be more constant in every good action, and more

more carefully avoid those sins that I have just now confessed, than hitherto I have done.

When the Priest pronounceth the *Absolution*, both here, and in the Communion Service, I attend to it, and receive it, with all gladness and humility of mind, begging that this Pardon, which God hath given his Ministers power to pronounce in general, may be applied to my self, and my cases in particular. Therefore, I esteem this Absolution very much, it being the Voice of God, and being pronounced at the Command of God, as the *Augustan* Confession speaketh; but it being only on the Conditions that we *Repent* and *Believe*, I immediately resolve to Repent and Believe, and I pray to God to Assist me, and Absolve me; and I am encouraged to hope that I am in God's favour, and that he doth pardon, and accept of me, when I hear this gracious Declaration of his mercy to all true Penitents. And I take it as well, and doubt not but it will be to as good purpose to me, as if it had been spoken to my self alone, and in a more presuming way and manner. For it being pronounced by so truly a constituted Priest, in God's name, and with his hearty desire, and Prayer for Pardon to his Congregation accompanying it, and the People at the same time devoutly accepting of it, and the terms on which it is granted; there seems nothing wanting as to what I can expect from

from the *Church*; and I have the same assurance also from *God*, as if it were pronounced the most authoritatively, according to the practice of the Church of *Rome*, *I absolve thee*. For seeing the Pardon of sins is in reference to the Life to come, I cannot expect so full and absolute a Pardon here, but that if I continue in, or return to a vicious course, even my former sins will return upon me. And seeing it comes only from God, I regard especially the promise of God, who hath promised forgiveness of sins to them that truly repent, and care not whether the Minister, who is as it were, the Herald or Person who makes Declaration of this promise, pronounce it authoritatively, *I absolve thee*, or declaratively, *He absolveth*. Especially, I being very sure that God will rather do more than less, when he sees we take not too much upon our selves. He loves Modesty and Humility in all cases, especially in reference to himself, and will rather give the more; when we presume and challenge, the less.

When the *Lord's Prayer* is read, I join with it, and repeat it, as the Church enjoins; my very repeating it, stirring up my own attention better, to regard and mind the full and comprehensive sense of each Petition; and to help our Infirmities, this most excellent Prayer is several times used, that so we may have opportunity to recollect or attend to that sense of it, the second

cond or third time, which by reason of the narrowness or distraction of our minds, or the vast sensiness of the Prayer it self, we were not able to mind sufficiently, the first time that it was read.

Indeed I very much approve of, and commend this Order of our Church, in requiring that the People shall with their own mouths *Repeat* the *Confession*, *Lord's Prayer*, *Psalms*, *Hymns*, and other *Responses*. For by this, the People are taught, that they are as much concerned in the Service of God, as the Priest, and ought to bear a part in it. The Peoples being required to answer sometimes, awakens and quickens their Attention and Devotion, which else would be asleep or remiss; and by their thus frequently joining in full sentences, and by saying *Amen* at the end of every Prayer, they not only hear how the Priest prays to God, but make every Prayer and Praise their own act and deed, are active in the Service of God, keep up a Sense of God and Religion more in their own minds, and so may hope to have a Blessing from God accordingly. But in reading the Psalms, or other Hymns alternately, I not only mind what I read my self, but as much what the Priest readeth, and apply it all to my self, and our own cases, with such a temper of mind as becomes a Christian.

Indeed

Indeed I am very glad that the *Psalms* are so much used, and so constantly in our Liturgy, not only by reason of our Conformity herein with the ancient People of God, the *Jews*, and the ancient Church of Christ in the first Ages, but also for the sensiness and devotion of the Psalms in general, which may be easily and properly applied to our selves, and to our cases, if we by *Zion*, *Jerusalem*, &c. understand our own Church and Nation, turning sometimes a Prayer into a Denunciation, and an Assertion into a Prayer, as there will be occasion, and which will be very natural and easy for a truly devoutly disposed mind to do; as every one may see, that will but read and use Doctor *Patrick's* excellent Paraphrase on the Book of Psalms. But especially, I admire the Book of Psalms for all the *Thanksgivings*, and *Praises* to God in it, that make up the bigger part of that most excellent Book; *Thanks* and *Praise* being doubtless the most acceptable part of Divine service, they being what we offer to God for his sake, not our own, they arguing the most elevated, and well disposed mind. For the most selfish man will *pray* sometimes, and *beg a boon*; but pride, stubbornness, or ingratitude will not suffer him to *Praise*, or *Thank* his Benefactor. And yet the highest of the Praises and Thanks that we can give, are both strictly due from us to God, and are all the Returns that we properly can

can make him, for all the innumerable Mercies we receive from him.

When the *Lessons* are read, I compose my self with all the attention and respect imaginable, as to the word and message of God himself to me, and cannot but admire at, and pity those men that seem mighty attentive at, and place much Religion in hearing, a *Sermon*, and yet are perfectly careless at, and seem almost to despise, the Reading of the *Scripture*; seeing whatever authority or excellency any Sermon hath, is derived from these Scriptures; and that the very best Sermons must be judged of, and examined by the Scripture, and are to be condemned, if they be not consonant to it. And though I know the Scripture very well already, and know beforehand what will be read; yet I am never the less attentive. For by exact attention, it very often falls out, that I observe somewhat from the Scriptures, which I had not observed before; at least, I have my old notions revived, and as from God, further impressed on me. And also by coming to hear the same things read which I knew before, I encourage the more Ignorant to come, and countenance the Publick Service, as well as do an Act of Homage and worship to God. Therefore, I expect not new things to be taught me generally, either out of the Scripture or in Sermons; but by constantly having the same

same great truths urged me to, I have a more exact and uniform Notion of Religion imprinted on me, and my mind is more inclined and worn into a suitable composure.

The *Hymns* between, and after the Lessons, I join in, as I do in the Psalms, they being all Praises of God, either for the coming of *Christ* into the World, and being made known to us, when so many of the great men of the World, both formerly, and now, have been ignorant of him, as in the *Magnificat*, *Benedictus*, and *Nunc dimittis;* or else to Praise God for that, and all other his Mercies, in the *Te Deum* and other Hymns. And surely no Man can grudge such a piece of service now, who hopes that it will be his business and happiness, to do the like to all Eternity.

With the same Devotion, do I stand up and rehearse the *Creed* with the Priest, to evidence my Continuance in the Faith of Christ, of which that is an Epitome. Besides that to profess my Belief in God, and of what he hath taught, is a very acceptable piece of service; I honour God by it, and make my self more religiously affected: So, that every command of Religion will have a better effect on me; for the force of every Command, depends on the truth of the Creed, and is enhanced, as to me, by a serious reflection on my Creed.

And

And then with the Congregation *I kneel* down also, and in all things demean my self, as the Order of the Church requires, and as the rest of the Congregation doth; the *Posture* being in our Church, always very properly suited to the *occasion.* And by my but observing the rules of the Church in these cases, I exercise two Virtues at once, I shew my Peaceableness, as well as my Devotion.

And accordingly at *Prayers* I never *sit*, but *kneel*, that being the lowliest posture, especially in these Countries; and I cannot carry my self too lowly when I speak to the great Majesty of Heaven and Earth, and that not only for others, for our Church and Nation, but for my self also, and for my own Eternal Salvation.

And though in all the prayers, it is not required nor suffered that I repeat them aloud, with, or after the Priest, as in the Confession and Lord's Prayer; yet I fail not to go along with him in my mind, and generally also to prevent the distraction of my thoughts, and to fasten and secure my attention, I even speak the words with my lips, yet so as not to be heard, for that would breed disturbance in the Church, which I always take care religiously to prevent. And to be sure I am ready always, at the end to answer, *Amen*, audibly; for I thereby keep my attention more awake by answering so often, and

shew

shew I join in all the Prayer that went before, and make it my own.

When any of the *Prayers* are read, I think it not enough for me to say my own *Private Prayers*, as they are taught to do in the Church of *Rome*, but take care to mind, and Pray earnestly for what the Prayer desireth; our service being for this end in our own Language, that every Man may understand, and join with the Priest. And I must not think that his Praying for me, or my being present, will suffice me or do me good, unless I also really with him Pray for my self and others.

And what is here said of *Publick Prayers* for others, extends also to *Thanksgivings*, either for general Blessings, or for particular Mercies to particular persons commemorated, as to *Women when Churched*, or *Persons recovered from sickness*, &c. For the same Charity that makes me so far to make others concerns my own, as to Pray for their good, will oblige me also to give Thanks to the God of all mercies, for all the Blessings and Benefits he hath bestowed on them.

As I omit no opportunity of going to Church, so, nor of receiving the *Sacrament*; and yet I always take most religious care to prepare my self, before I come to it. For the frequent Celebration of this Holy Office, is what the Church of Christ always practised, and our Church expects;

And

And a constant use of it, and of preparation in order to it, I look on as a most prudent, if not necessary means, to counterbalance the constant solicitations and temptations of Life. And by such a constancy, I both honour and obey God, and keep my own Devotion warm, and by the blessing of God, shall make Piety and Goodness even customary and habitual to me, which is the greatest Blessing surely of which we are capable in this Life. I look on it indeed as the most holy Office of our Religion, and therefore, of all things in this life, dread being *Ex-communicated*, or debarred from coming to it; *Excommunication*, when it proceeds on just grounds, being, as *Tertullian* calls it, an *earnest or foretaste of the last Judgment and Condemnation there;* and therefore, I take care neither by *Heresy*, *Schism*, *Profaneness*, nor yet by any *contempt* of Authority, or of the Ecclesiastical Courts, to have it pronounced against me; for to say no more, I think no wise man would willingly come under the suspicion of so great, and intolerable an evil, or have it on any account inflicted on him.

But though I look thus on the Sacrament, as the most holy Office of our Religion, as a holy thing which Christ hath left to be remembered by, as it were, to supply and to make up, the loss of his Bodily Presence, and to the due receiving of

of which, Christ hath promised invaluable blessings, it being called by the name of his *Body and Blood*; yet still I know it is but Bread and Wine, that there is no *Transubstantiation*, the very Body of Christ that hung on the Cross being in heaven and not here, it being against the truth of Christ's natural Body, that it should be in more places than one at the same time. And on this account, I worship not the Sacrament, or what appears to my Eyes, but God and Christ in my mind: As I reckon not the Celebration of the Sacrament to be at all a Propitiatory Sacrifice, my hopes being only in the merits of that Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, which was once offered, as St. *Paul* says, to take away our sins, of which this is only a Commemoration.

I am constant also at all *Sermons* in my own Parish, and when I can conveniently, often at Sermons in other neighbouring Churches, when we have none in our own, and hope to receive good by them, they being part of the ordinary Means which God hath appointed for my Instruction, and therefore am very Attentive as to the Explication of that Word of God, by obeying of which I hope to be saved. But yet I never suffer the *Sermon*, or my Love to it, to justle out, or under-value the *Prayers*, or the *Sacrament*, these being more properly the *Service*

of

of God, and *Acts of Devotion*, than that. For Prayers, and Praises, and the Sacrament, are directed to God, have a direct relation to him; but Sermons are especially in reference to my self, and for my own Information, and therefore must yield to the other, as the Means are less noble than the End. Besides also, the Scriptures being read have more Authority than a Sermon, and are more necessary, and should be minded accordingly. And it is the same thing to me, whether the Parson read his Sermon, or Preach without reading. Although I must needs say, there is hardly any one man in the world but will speak better, and more useful sense *premeditately*, than *extempore*, and though he that speaks *extempore* may speak with more heat, yet he that writes down what he says, is like to speak with more Consistency; and if we look on a Sermon to be any way in reference to God, surely it ought to be as Sensy and Consistent as we can frame it. And I reckon that every man that may be exceeding useful in the Church, hath not the same Presence of mind, fluency of Expressions, or grace of Delivery that another man hath; and there is scarcely any man but will speak, not only with more Consistency and weight, but also will be guilty of less Impertinencies and Improprieties, if he write down his Sermons, than if he do not: and

I am taught to mind always the *Sense* of a Sermon, more than the *Noise* and *Tone* with which it is spoken; and I desire rather to have my Reason convinced, and Judgment informed, than my Passions and Affections raised by the most Eloquent and Pathetical harangue.

As to *Baptism*, I am taught the absolute necessity of it, where it can be had, we being by it, admitted into the number of Christ's Disciples, made part of his Body, and have a share in all the Prayers for, and Blessings to his Church. And therefore, I take a most religious care, that my Children be Baptized as soon as conveniently they can. But I bring them to Church, and suffer them not to be Baptized at home, unless in case of utmost extremity. For as I think that Publick Service ought to be preferred before Private, so I think there is no Office, or part of Religious Service that more necessarily requires to be Publick, than this of Baptism, the Child being by it solemnly admitted into the Church of Christ, of which the whole Congregation are to be witnesses, and all their Prayers being desired, in behalf of him. And when any one is *Baptized*, I both put myself in mind of my own Duty, as Christian; and examine myself how I have kept my Vow of Baptism; and how carefully I have performed my Promise and Duty towards those Children

ren in whose name I have answered as Godfather; and also devoutly and heartily (as the Church teacheth,) pray that this Child may have Grace to live some way agreeable to this holy Religion, into which he is now admitted.

I am glad also to assist at the *Catechizing* of Children, and think it no time lost, to have the Fundamentals of our Religion repeated over in the Catechism. For it is by them that I, as well as the Children, can be saved. And I think it a mighty advantage to have the whole sum, and substance, not of one Text of Scripture or of one point, but of all Scripture and of whole Christianity delivered at once, as it is in the Catechism. And it will naturally put several things into my mind, which either I did not mind before, or had forgot. And so I shall also benefit myself as well as countenance Religion and the Publick Service, and encourage the Children, and do them good.

I omit not to bring my own Children or Godchildren, as soon as they are about eleven or twelve years old, to be Confirmed by the Bishop (having first taught them their Catechism, and the design of Confirmation) for by so doing, I obey the Church, shew my own Religious care, make some good impressions on the Childrens minds as to Religion, and put them in mind of

their Vow of Baptism, and the necessity of their performing it, and I hope I get further a great deal of good for the Child. For the *Prayers* of one good man for another, are very available; and therefore, much more those of Persons so highly Commissionated by God as our Bishops are, who not only *Pray* for, but also are empowered to *Bless* in God's name. And I have much Reason to hope that God will hearken to them, and grant what they Pray for, and make good, and fulfil what by their Blessing us in God's name, they give us ground to hope for.

When the *Banns* are published in the Church, or people are *Married*, I am so far from making it a matter of sport, as many do, that it stirs me up to pray for a Blessing from God on them; and it at the same time, puts me in mind of my own Vow and Promise in Marriage, how I have performed it; and I make it also an occasion of a fresh engagement in myself, to keep it strictly. For though I look not on *Matrimony* as a *Sacrament*, yet I look on it as the most solemn Engagement among men, and Sacred, as being a Vow made before God, and witnessed to before men, and in a case of the greatest moment in this Life: and therefore in all respects, a proper occasion for seriousness and devotion.

When the *Sick* are mentioned in the Church to be Prayed for, I pray for them heartily (as I would

would others should pray for me if I were in the like case) not absolutely that they should Recover, but if it be God's will, and if it will be most for God's Glory, and for their Good; that God will give them Patience and Thankfulness, and make both their Sickness, and Death itself, whenever it shall happen, a real Blessing to them.

And I make use of these *Prayers for the Sick*, to be instances to myself of my own Mortality, and Arguments with myself to Prepare for Death, which I know is appointed for all men. And hence I go to *Visit* the Sick that are of my Acquaintance, both to Comfort them, and give them good Advice, and also to work upon myself; and I apply to myself what I say, or I hear others to say, to them, concerning their Sickness and Death; and especially when I am Sick I send for the Parson of my Parish to assist me, and counsel me, to Pray for me, and Guide me, and to put me in mind of several things, in order to my departure hence, which else I should forget. For always people need most advice in their own cases, especially when of so great Importance; for they are too apt to be partial, and favourable to themselves. And hence I make no scruple to Confess, if not the Particularities, yet the general nature of my Sins, especially those of the deepest dye, and that

that lie hardest on my Conscience. For if I be in earnest to have such sins pardoned, Religious Prudence will oblige me to take all possible care, that I may thoroughly understand the state in which I am, and the danger of my Condition and my surest method, in order to a Pardon and Cure; and all this, I may best hope for from God's Minister, who both loves me, and is most likely to judge most unprejudicedly of me, hath a particular concern in me, and for me, and is by God impowered and enabled, to assist and help me. For these and the like reasons, I think it not sufficient to be prayed for in the Church when I am sick, but I desire frequently to be *Visited*, and not only to Examine myself, but also to submit to another's Examination and Direction, but still am sensible that it is my own repenting that is required in order to the pardon of my sins, else his *Absolution* will signify nothing.

And all these parts of Religious Service I am so far from slighting or undervaluing, because they are prescribed, and we commanded to use these words and no other, that I like them much the better. For as far as I can find, since Miracles ceased, there always was *a Form of Prayer* and Service prescribed, and it never was left to every Clergyman to say what Prayers, and

and use what Form of Service he pleased; much less, was an *extempore Prayer* to God in Publick ever approved of. For besides the Indecency that will often be committed in Extemporary Prayers (which surely ought to be prevented if we can, when we address ourselves to the Infinite Majesty of Heaven and Earth in behalf of his Church, as well as on the concerns of our own Souls) it speaks respect to God, when we take all possible Care, that nothing but what is well weighed, be offered to him. A prescribed Form also is the only way, to keep up Uniformity among ourselves. And seeing what ever is fit for us to ask in Publick, is known sufficiently, why should not the Expressions to be used on such occasions, be defined also? If the matter be known, why should not the words? Besides that, it is an ease to my mind, when I know before-hand what I am to join in: and I confess there are very few Men, with whose *extempore* Prayers I would willingly join. In *extempore* Prayers also, it is too often found, that he that Prays, will often more express and vent his own private thoughts and passions, than the desires, and wants of his Congregation and the Church; all which, are things utterly to be avoided, in all Religious offices.

And seeing a *Prescribed Form* in general, is on many Accounts thus expedient, or necessary

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in Publick: I think nothing can be objected against *our Liturgy*, either for the *matter*, or for the *Frame* and *Composure* of it. For it is, for its *matter*, exactly agreeable to Scripture and the Genius of our Religion; nothing prayed for or done, but what (as far as we can learn of his will by Scripture) is acceptable to that great God, whom alone we serve and pray to: And for the *Composure* of our Liturgy, it is in every thing, such as Publick devotions ought to be, and so exactly after the ancient pattern, fitted with Responses, Hymns, Prayers, Thanksgivings, Scriptures read, Sermons preached, Sacraments administered, and all other Occasional Religious Offices performed, that I cannot but admire it, and must profess my wonder and astonishment, that any persons should really either dislike or slight it.

But I will not now stay to vindicate the several parts of it, from the Objections brought against it, but refer all men to what the Judicious Mr. *Hooker* hath written on this Subject, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*.

And though our Church hath not defined exactly, and commanded positively what shall be done by every particular Man, on either the Feast or Fast days; yet seeing she hath set apart such days for those purposes, I think my self bound to have a particular respect to them.

And

And accordingly I make use of the *Feast-days*, not only in joining with the Congregation in the Prayers appointed for that day, but also in thanking God in private for all Mercies, and particularly for the mercy commemorated, in serving God more that day than ordinary, and endeavouring particularly by my Charity, to do more good, and by a prudent demeanour of my self, to encourage both Thankfulness in myself, Friendship in the World, and Piety towards God.

The *Fast-days* also I respect with some kind of denial of myself, as to my usual and lawful liberty in Meat and Drink; and this, without affectation, or making a noise, or placing Religion in the kind of meat and drink. And Fasting being in Scripture prescribed, I cannot think it an improper method for the subduing of Sin in us. And seeing it is necessary, and supposed in Scripture, that we Fast sometimes, all Reason and Peaceableness, as well as Obedience, will easily determine me to that time, which the Church shall appoint. But still I take care that my Fasting neither put me out of humour, nor make me to be peevish, or conceited in my self, nor censure other men, lest I make my good to be evil-spoken of, and so lose the benefit of it.

In short, I am strictly Regular according to the Rules of the Liturgy, and Command of the Church

Church of *England* in her Canons; and I wish all men were even as I, and pity them that are not, and pray to God that they that are otherwise minded, may be convinced, and see their Error. I thank God who hath given me so good an understanding in my duty; and hope by my steadiness and good temper, to prevail with others. But yet I forbear judging or condemning all that do not exactly as I do, or that agree not with me in all these things, which though they are not Fundamentals, yet are such things, as on which the flourishing of Religion and the peace of the Church, do very much depend. For I consider some great prejudices may lie on their minds which may in time be removed, that they may be in some involuntary mistakes which may be corrected; and as I have an opportunity, and as becomes the nature of my place in the world, I will endeavour to correct. But still I do not so much attend to other Mens scruples, as to be by them deterred from my own duty; for our holy Religion professed in this Church, teacheth me to take care of my own Practice, but not rashly to condemn other men. For I can make more excuses for others, than I can for my self; and for *me* to be wanting in any part of Service, or Ceremony, I may justly think may be a greater fault, than for others, who perhaps know not, or mind not so much

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the Reason, and Consequence of being strictly regular. At least I am sure that their being guilty of a fault, will not excuse me, if I act the same, and every Man shall stand or fall to his own Master. And I am sure it more becomes an humble and private Christian to look after his own Actions, than to be sharp in spying out, or severe in censuring the Carriage of others.

CHAP. V.

Of Additions to the Faith.

I RECKON the Doctrine taught and professed in this Church, and the Way and Method of Divine Service here used and practised, to be sufficient to Salvation; and that, as there is nothing Commanded that is unlawful, or superfluous, (the *Romanists* themselves condemning nothing that we teach as necessary, but owning it all to be fit and good;) so also, I think there is nothing wanting or deficient, that there is no necessary or useful Article of Faith that is not in this Church expressly owned, no Duty towards God or Man, that is not according to the Rules of this Church taught, and practised. And therefore whatever is further urged, as necessary to Salvation, or is required of me in order to Church-Communion, I cannot but think either false or unnecessary. And on this ground, I must disown the belief of the Infallibility of the Bishop or Church of *Rome*, or subjection to them, to be necessary in order to Church-Communion or Salvation: Though the *Romanists* press

press this, as the first thing necessary. For as to the Pope's Infallibility, I cannot think that the good and wise God should either have appointed any one Man, or any set number of men, as an Infallible Judge and Interpreter of his Will, to whom we must attend and obey, resigning up our Judgment and reason, and yet never tell us where this man, or number of men is to be found; whereas surely this ought to have been of all things, the most plainly and frequently urged in Scripture; It ought to have been as visible there, as that *God is One*, or as that *Jesus* is *Christ*. Nay indeed methinks Scripture should have told us nothing else, but where to find this Infallible Judge, and how to obey him. For all other Precepts and Rules of Scripture, must certainly be some derogation to the Power and Authority of this Infallible Guide.

And seeing this infallibility cannot be made out, nor shewn in whom it doth reside (for even they of the *Roman* Communion cannot agree where to place it, and all other Christians utterly disown it). How can it be a necessary Point in order to Salvation, to submit to the Bishop of *Rome*, or receive and practise whatever he tells us we ought to receive and practise? For he may be mistaken, as well as other men. And I think it is very evident, that unless

less it be on account of his Infallibility, we in *England* owe him no more obedience or service, than we owe to any other good and Christian Bishop: Nor do we owe him so much respect, as we owe to our own Bishop; for it is certain that we belong not to his Temporal, nor to his Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction.

And till they of the Church of *Rome*, from their own Example, shew us which is this Infallible Judge, and what use he is of, by putting an end to their own Divisions and Controversies, I shall certainly conclude that they do not believe themselves when they say, he is somewhere among them; or at least, if he be among them, he had as good not have been there, for he is of no use or benefit to them. Much less can we believe it necessary to Salvation, to own his Authority and Infallibility. Particularly let them make the Council of *Trent* to be fully received in *France*, and its Authority owned there (and yet if an Infallible Judge ever pretended to appear among them, it was in that Council which made a new Creed, and new Religion:) But we know the Authority of that Council is utterly disowned in *France*, and nothing approved of, as decreed by that Council. Let them, by the help of this Infallibility, end and decide all the great and dividing Questions among their own Members; let them resolve,

and

and satisfy the Quietists now at *Rome* itself, determine the Disputes between, and Reconcile the Jesuits and Jansenists; we shall not else think it is out of love to us or to Truth, that they tell us of this Infallibility, but for some other and bad Designs on us; at least I cannot see how they can expect that we should own and acknowledge it. For if they really had such an excellent thing among them, I do believe that they love themselves so well, that they would apply it to the Cure of their own miserable Dissentions and Divisions; and they will never persuade us they have it, till they first of all, use it thus towards themselves.

And if it be not on pretence of Infallibility, that they reckon it necessary for us to be in Communion with the Bishop of *Rome*, I cannot see how they can on any other account, plead it necessary that we should be subject to him. For *I* cannot think it possible that God should make obedience to any human thing, to be the first thing necessary in order to Heaven, especially a human Authority distinct from that Regal Authority, under which *I* was born, and to which *I* owe Subjection, according to both St. *Peter*'s and St. *Paul*'s Command; much less, that all the world should be subject to one man, and much less yet, that this should be, and yet God Almighty never tell us in Scripture

where

where this Universal Monarch should reside. And yet they may talk what they will, it is not our Believing agreeably to true Christianity, and for the saving of our Souls, that they would have us submit to them, and own their *Infallibility*; it is not out of love to Truth, or to us, that they at all desire our Conversion, as they call it; but it is for the love of our money, and that they may domineer the more over our Estates and Purses, as well as our Consciences. And hence it is, that the Conversion of *England* is at this day, so little regarded and promoted at *Rome*. For the Pope and Cardinals are old men, and they say, that we being very obstinate, there is no hopes that any good should be done with us, in their days; and if ever we should be Converted, we should bring no money to them, we shall not be fleeced in their times, and they are not much concerned for those that will come after them. They may spend money on us, to send and maintain men to Convert us; but they shall receive no money from us. Thus they argue, and talk freely at *Rome*. And this is one, if not the main Reason, that the Pope and Cardinals are so backward to press our Conversion, especially when they consider at the same time, that the men chiefly employed in our Conversion, are Jesuits, of whom even the Pope, and all the wise *Italians*, are both afraid and ashamed.

Nay

Nay indeed, they wonder at us, of all men in the World, that we should at all think of embracing that Religion, which they that know it best, and get most money by, are weary of, and going to throw off; almost all the Learned and Ingenious *Romans*, that care for any Religion, being *Quietists*, and consequently no Admirers of the exercise of Religion, according to present Popery. Thus the Wise *Italians* think and argue; and yet surely if there be *Infallibility* in the *Romish* Church, it is among them, and they are nearest to it. And if any here plead (as some I know have the impudence to do) that there are no *Divisions* at *Rome* concerning *Quietism*, they may as soon persuade that they are all *Virtuous* there, that there is no *Vice*, or that the Pope neither is, nor ever was there; and I will undertake to defend all this too, as well as *Transubstantiation*. And if there happen such another Pope to succeed this Pope in his enmity against the Jesuits, I see not why the Jesuits may not persuade the World that the true Pope is not at *Rome*, but at *Paris*, or where they please. For *Paris* is as often called the Seat of St. *Peter*, and the Infallible Chair, as *Rome* is called so in the New Testament; and I believe it is as evident from Ecclesiastical History, that St. *Peter* sat twenty-five years Bishop in one City, as in the other.

And as thus *I* cannot believe either the Infallibility of the Bishop of *Rome* to be true, or subjection to him to be necessary to Salvation: So nor can *I* think the other Additions that he hath made to the Creed, to be parts of true Christianity, much less to be necessary to be believed.

All the Contradictions that a man can reckon up, perhaps, may be as Reconcileable, as the doctrine of *Transubstantiation*. And the Christian Religion being by our Saviour, and the Apostles recommended to our *Reason*, it is not possible but they must give us leave to make use of our *Reason* in judging of the several parts of this Religion. For, though where we Contemplate on any thing that entrencheth on Infinity, we are sensible our Reason is at a loss, and we submit to Revelation without more ado (for so if we Contemplate but on the *Extension* of the material World, whether it be Infinite, or no; or on the *Divisibility* of matter, whether it can be into Infinite parts or no; or of the *Ante* and *Post duration* of the World, or Time, whether it was possible for it to have a Beginning, or End, or no; whether there can be an Infinite Number, or no, *&c.*) In all these kinds of Questions, though only concerning Natural things, yet we must confess our Reason to be puzzled; and so what concerns the Attributes,

butes, and Nature of God, if there be any thing above our Reason taught us in Scripture, it is not the fault of Religion, but of our own Minds, and their Incapacity, that we do not comprehend it (it all concerns Infinity, which we are unable to comprehend, or treat of;) But that there should be such Difficulties, and Contradictions in our Apprehensions of a thing so entirely liable to our Senses, as a piece of Bread is, one would not suspect.

Indeed if the Church of *Rome* had told us, there are an infinite number of parts of matter in that Bread, we might have yielded to them. But for them to tell us that there are an infinite number of Bodies of Men, and all six foot long, in a piece of Bread of an Inch long, and all this infinite number of Bodies in this one lump, to be but one Body whilst it is all together, and all these Millions of Bodies that are on earth, to be not different from, but the same with one another, and with that One Glorified Body that is in Heaven; that at the Consecration, that Body comes down from Heaven, though it stir not at all; that it is Eaten by every one that receives the Sacrament, and yet continues to be Eaten by thousands of others still; that it neither nourisheth as flesh, nor hath any property of Flesh according to themselves, for it may be eaten in *Lent*, that it is

real flesh, though no flesh appear, and that there is no Bread, though only Bread appear; that when it is mouldy, or eaten by Rats and Mice, that neither Bread nor Flesh is mouldy, or eaten by these Rats and mice: All these, and innumerable more Contradictions are contained in this Doctrine of *Transubstantiation.* Besides that this Doctrine, as taught in the Church of *Rome,* is contrary also to Scripture, which calls it Bread when it is eaten, 1 *Cor.* 11. *Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread,* and in many other places.

But now if after all, it should be true, that Christ should be in the Sacrament, as the Papists imagine; yet our Reason and Senses so fully informing us the contrary, and our Saviour having no where bid us lay aside our Reason or Sense in this case, but He himself even after his Resurrection appealing to the Reason and Sense of St. *Thomas* for the verity of his Flesh and Bones; we may be sure that he would excuse our Unbelief when we have so many Arguments against it, and nothing for it, but one single expression, which is undoubtedly Figurative as to the Cup, for he calls it *Cup,* instead of *Wine* in the Cup; and we may justly think it is so Figurative as to the *Bread,* when he calls it his *Body.* For the Eastern Nations, and especially the

the *Jews* very much use such Figurative Expressions; and our Saviour elsewhere calls himself the *true Vine*, the *Way*, the *Door*, which no man certainly ever understood in a literal sense. But especially the Church of *Rome* so strictly requiring the highest Divine Honours to be paid to that which appears under the form of Bread and Wine, we are infinitely the most safe in paying it no Divine Honours, because we have all the reason in the World to believe, it is nothing but Bread and Wine. And if it should be as the Papists suppose, we may be sure Christ would excuse us, if we Worship him, and Pray to him as in Heaven sitting at the right hand of God, though we take no notice of him here, where, according to themselves, he appears but at best *incognito*, and hath no where commanded to be Worshipped as Corporally present there: And God declares himself a *jealous* God as to his Worship; and therefore if he should not be there in Body, they cannot deny but they commit flat Idolatry. And yet the worshipping of the Host, as they call it, is of all things the most strictly enjoined, and insisted on, as if there were no danger at all of giving God's Glory to another, and provoking his jealousy. And yet according to the Papists themselves, the *Elevation of the Host*, and the *Worshipping of it* by the people, hath been but lately ordained

ly ordained in the Church of *Rome* itself; and it is not to this day practised in all the Eastern Churches, and the appointing a Feast for it, called the *Feast of God*, and the Worshipping it, when carried in Procession, or to a Sick person, is of a later date.

For the same Reason also, I am very shy of using any *Image* in Divine Worship; for I cannot but think that Images were forbidden the *Jews* in the Second Commandment, and are forbidden us still. And though the Church of *Rome* pretends that they are Assistances to Devotion, I cannot but think them to be rather hindrances, and distractions; and that a man must be very sensual, and immersed in matter, whom an Image will assist in his Apprehensions of God, or make to be more devoutly affected towards him. I am sure they are an insufferable offence to both *Jews* and *Turks*, and make them so averse to Christianity, that there is no hopes of Converting them. And yet no man can say that the Worship of them is at all necessary, and all must grant they may be intolerably abused, as we find by the Old Testament they were, and from the practice of the Heathen, both of old, and still. And though the *Learned men* in the Church of *Rome* may have better Notions of things; yet it is to be feared that the *common people* do perform the same Worship

to

to them, that the Heathen did to their Images. And if the Image only puts people in mind of the Person, why should the Image of the Virgin *Mary* at *Loretto* be more esteemed, than any other? For I cannot fancy it is more like the Virgin *Mary*, who certainly was no Blackamoor. Therefore by their running thus to one Image, rather than another, they must necessarily think, that there is some Holiness in the Images themselves, some Divine Virtue resident in them, which is the notion, in which the Heathens looked on, and worshipped their Images: And God himself hath said, He is a *Jealous God*, especially concerning Images, in the second Commandment, which the Church of *Rome* is so sensible of, that they suffer not their people to Read, or Learn that Commandment, lest they should boggle at the worship of Images.

Nor do *I* think much better of the Prayers which they make, and the worship they pay to Saints departed, though these are not Dead, and senseless, as the Images are. For the very praying to them at all times, in all places, and on all occasions, argues that they must own some kind of *Omniscience*, and *Omnipresence* in the Saints. For else how can the Saints hear us, where-ever we are? And all Religious Prayer being a part of Divine Honour, we think it too much

much to be ascribed to a Creature, especially when they pray to a Saint, not only to *Pray for* them, but *to give* them all Blessings, Spiritual, and Temporal, for Protection from all Enemies, Ghostly and Bodily, from all Evils at Sea, and Land: By so doing, they ascribe a kind of *Omnipotency* to the Saint also.

And though they do grant, that the Saint gets these good things for them of God, yet they are beholden to the Saint, else they think, God would not have given them. And therefore though they own God to be the original Author, yet they look on the Saint as the immediate Donor, to whom they are immediately, and especially obliged. And after all this, they cannot but grant, that there is no necessity of praying to a Saint. For they can as well, at the same time pray to God himself, who they are sure, hears them, and can help them, and who will be so far from taking it ill, that he expects to be prayed to by us, and is called in the Scripture, *the God that heareth Prayer.*

But though God is so willing to be prayed to by us, yet still there are some Prayers, which I cannot think that he is much pleased withal; And that is, Prayers for the Dead, which are so constantly offered up, and make a considerable part of the Devotions of the Church of *Rome.* For whatever Instances are found in the Primitive

tive Church of Prayers for the Dead, were only either Evidences of their Belief of the Souls living after Death, which they thought proper to Inculcate, and by this means, to Evidence in a Heathen World; or else were Arguments of their own abundant Charity, and of the Imperfect state as to Happiness, in which they supposed the Best men to be, till the general Resurrection; but it is evident, they had no knowledge of those Purgatory Pains, which are now the only occasion of the prayers for the Dead in the Church of *Rome*. And accordingly, they prayed only for the Best people, for such of whose salvation and happiness there was no doubt, as the Virgin *Mary*, and Apostles; which is directly contrary to the present Doctrine, and practice of the Church of *Rome*.

And though the Ancients, on some mistaken Notions, concerning the state of the Soul, did sometimes thus Pray for the Souls of good men; yet seldom or never for the Souls of bad men. Nor did they make that ill use of it, that is now made in the *Roman* Communion. For now in the Church of *Rome*, nothing is so easily secured as Eternal Salvation, the Absolution of a Priest being sufficient for that. Therefore all that any man need fear, is only the Punishment of Purgatory; and to pray for their deliverance thence, is half the business of their surviving Friends,

Friends, and the Purchase perhaps of half their Estates. But if the Justice of God would not pass by, or forgive this Temporal Punishment, as they call it, before the Person's Death, and whilst he might amend, and be made better by the use of the means of Grace, how can we think that God should pardon him now, seeing there is no hope of his growing better. I cannot indeed so much wonder that *the Church* now should be glad to have this Opinion prevail among the people; But *I* admire that *the people*, or indeed any that love Truth, should rely, or depend on it, especially seeing there is not one word in Scripture to encourage this Opinion, nor one Instance of Prayer for the Dead; not any supposition of any Fire in the other World, but that which never *shall be quenched*; nothing but vehement Exhortations to *work while it is called to day, before the Night of Death comes, when no man can work*; altogether another kind of method of Salvation than is now taught, and practised in the Church of *Rome.*

I might also insist on many other Articles, and shew them to be *Innovations* or *Additions* to the Faith, as of the seven *Sacraments*, *Traditions*, Sacrifice of the *Mass*, *Communion in one kind*, *Indulgencies*, ascribing such virtue to Institutions of their own, viz. *a Monastic Life*, *Holy Water*, *Crossing themselves*, their Doctrine of *Merit*,

Merit, and *Supererogation*, of the *Pope's power to Depose Princes, absolve Subjects from their Allegiance*, (which I persuade myself, St. *Peter* would never have pretended to) of the lawfulness of *breaking their Faith with Heretics*; and especially, seeing they of the Church of *Rome* insist on these, as the very Foundation of Religion, and will promise you Salvation, if you do but own, and profess these, let your Life be what it will be, according to that saying of *Tertullian*, concerning the Heretics of his time, *Nunquam facilius proficitur quàm in castris Rebellium, ubi ipsum esse illic promoveri est.*

But of all the Points of Popery there have been so many, and so excellent Discourses of late written by the Clergy, especially in and about the City of *London*, that I need say no more, but refer my *Reader* to them.

CHAP. VI.

Of Civil Converſation.

THOUGH the World be one of the Enemies which I am warned of in Scripture and in my Baptism, I renounce and promise to fight against, and though the ill customs and examples in it, are too often a Snare to many; Yet still I am taught in the Church of *England*, that I may lawfully, and ought to converse in it. For as it hath difficulties and temptations to Vice, so it gives also occasion to exercise our Virtues; and therefore is no more evil or dangerous than our life itself here, which is a state of trial, in which it is expected that we must do good and suffer hardship in order to an Eternal reward. And I cannot think that the wise and good God would, not only have sent us into the World, but also have made so many employments necessary and useful in order to our subsistence here, if it had been a sin to manage those employments, or to converse with those that do. Therefore *I* rest fully assured that whatever employment is necessary, or useful in the World,

World, is also lawful; and whatever is lawful, may be lawfully managed by my self, or any other good Christian. St. *John* the Baptist, the Forerunner of our Saviour, when the Publicans and Soldiers came to ask him what they should do, doth not bid them lay down their employments, as either unlawful, unfit, or unsafe, but gives them good and useful Rules, fitted to their several cases, but suffers them still to continue in their employments: And yet those two employments seem as much to expose Men to temptations, and to have as much to be said against them, as any. And we find the Apostles, and particularly St. *Paul* in his Epistles, to give advice to Persons of all kind of conditions, and to prescribe Rules concerning the carriage and behaviour of *Husbands* and *Wives*, *Parents* and *Children*, *Masters* and *Servants*, *Magistrates* and *People* in Church and State, and both *Superior* and *Inferior*; which is to me an undeniable argument, that in every one of these Relations, one may live as becomes a good Christian.

And particularly as to Government and Magistracy, *I* am so far from thinking it unlawful, that *I* esteem it necessary, and look on it as one of the most Sacred things in the World; for it is of God's appointment, and on the maintaining of which, the good of Mankind doth much depend.

And

And of all kinds of Government *I* like Monarchy, it being a resemblance of the highest, and the best fitted for preventing Factions and Divisions, and for the more regular administration of affairs, and seems naturally to derive itself from Paternal Authority or the power of Fathers over their Children; every Father of a Family, or Patriarch of old time, as *Adam*, *Seth*, *Noah*, *Shem*, *Abram*, *Jacob*, being a kind of king over their Children and Grand-Children; and so the Name of Father is thought at length to have been changed into that of King, for so we find *Kings* in Scripture frequently called *Fathers*; and they are always supposed to have that same care and tenderness over their People, as a Father hath for his Children and Family; and accordingly, may justly challenge the same kind of hearty love and service, and obedience from them.

And especially in this Country, I hold myself bound, as far as I can, to support and maintain the *Monarchy*, in all the *just* and *ancient Rights* of it: For it is the form of Government that hath been always established and in use here, and is in the frame of our Laws and Constitutions so constantly respected, that it is a dreadful danger, as well as sin, to endeavour any change or alteration of Government. And if there be any right on earth, surely Monarchy hath

hath right with us, and hath at least as good a title to all its Powers, Rights and Privileges, as any of its Subjects can have to their Honours, Properties and Estates. And I think myself bound to do what I can, to maintain this Monarchy, in its true Line and Succession; the Monarchy, of *England* being always esteemed as truly an Hereditary and Successive a Monarchy as any in the world; the Crown descending from Fathers to Children, whether Males or Females, not liable to be disposed, alienated, or sold, nor depending on any election or choice of the People; and according to this method, our present King enjoys the Crown, who hath, as I believe, the truest and most ancient right to his Crowns that any King in the known parts of the World hath: For though the Succession hath had sometimes interruptions, and the Crown hath been violently seized on, yet still the right to Succession was then generally owned, and the interruptions were afterwards censured as Usurpations; and whatever irregularities there were sometimes for a while, yet at last the stream did return into its true channel, and the Monarchy became so settled by the good providence of God, that as far as History can inform us, our present King is Heir both of the *Saxon*, *Norman* and *Scottish* Lines. And our Kings being both by the Laws of God, and also

by

by the Laws of our Land, supposed to look on themselves towards their Subjects, not as Masters towards their Slaves, but as Parents towards their Children, and to deal with them accordingly. I take care therefore, also to pay him the same kind of true filial obedience, service and submission, as to a Parent, to Pray for him, and wish him well, to be tender of his Honour, and careful of his Good, neither to wrong him my self, nor suffer others to wrong him, as far as is in my power, to look on him as one set over us by God for good, and to respect him Conscientiously on this account: And this I look on as a better foundation for true Loyalty and Obedience, than *fear*. For that Prince that only designs to *terrify* his Subjects and keep them in awe, hath but a very uncertain hold of his People.

And as thus Government is necessary in the world, and Monarchy is lawfully established among us, so for a man to have a share of this Government, and to be subservient to the Monarchy, is not only lawful, but for him to discharge it well, it is exceeding commendable; he thereby will purchase a blessing to himself from God, and be a publick blessing to the World. And I am not ashamed of the meanness of my place and rank whatever it is; for in every Government or Body of men that live together

together, there must needs be a great variety of Employments, some higher, some lower, some more, some less honourable; yet the meanest, if honest, are both useful for the good of the whole, and may be lawfully managed by a Christian. And though I will not thrust my self into another man's office and business, that being the certain cause of disorder and confusion, nor am I very forward to solicit or sue for any publick employment, for I consider the weight and moment of it, for which I must give an account both to God and the Publick, and it is possible that by my having this place I may exclude another that will manage it better: yet when I am lawfully called or appointed to any place, I refuse it not, knowing that some body must have all these places, and though I am not so sure of my own *abilities*, yet I am as sure of my own *integrity* and desire to do good, as any can be; and I am sensible that *integrity* goes a great way towards the discharge of my trust: but I do not by reason of trouble or charge, avoid any office even in my own Parish; for by every one of these I serve God and my Neighbours, the Church and State, and a little pains or money laid out in so good a cause, is a great gain. If the place that I have, be honorable or beneficial, I look not so much at the profit or honour of it, as at the trust reposed in

me, and the opportunity that I have by it of doing good; and to stir up my self to a careful management of the trust I have, I consider that both God and Man will expect that whilst I am in this place, I should be more useful in the World than other men, or else my account will be sad at the last day. And this consideration will have another good effect on me, it will make me also more willing to leave or part with this place though very beneficial; to be sure, it will make me keep it no longer than I can with honour, and a safe and good Conscience.

And by my doing my Duty honestly and discreetly, though but in an inferior place, perhaps I may stop a gap, by which mischief might come to the Publick; I may encourage my Inferiors, shame my Superiors, if they are remiss, and give a good example to all; and this is of manifold advantage to the Publick.

And so if I have any Vote or interest for the choice of a Member in Parliament, or any publick Minister or Officer, or the disposal of any employment in which the Publick is concerned, I do nothing for favour or friendship, I regard not any kind of Interest or obligation of my own; for I always think that regard is first to be had to the Publick and the good of it: and therefore, I employ my pains and interest, for such as, I verily believe, are fittest for it in them-

themselves, and will do most good to the Publick, both as to Church and State. For I hold it highly unreasonable that any kind of Publick Office or employment, should be bestowed as a reward for former Services or kindnesses to my self, for by such kind of transactions, I plainly sell the Publick to pay my own private debts and obligations.

Next to the publick, I reckon my self especially concerned for my own Family; that being so particularly committed to my charge, that I only am accountable for them.

My Wife I not only take care of, but shew all respect and kindness to her, as to my best and dearest friend in the World; for so by my marrying her, I took and owned her; and in the Church before God and the Congregation, I promised I would so carry my self towards her; and I can never expect the blessing of God, if I break a vow so solemnly made before God, and in so great a Case. And to put my self the more effectually in mind of this, I often read over the Office of Matrimony, to stir up my self to a strict observance of my Vow there, and to prevent my varying from it.

If I have a Father or Mother alive, I not only pay them all possible respect and observance, but give them all kind of aid and support that I am able, on every occasion, as being both

commanded so to do by God, and also in gratitude for what they have done for me; and further, as an engagement on my own Children to shew the same duty to their Mother and me, when we shall be old.

To my Children I shew the same tenderness, as to my Wife, and give them, as I am able, such education and instruction, as may keep them strictly virtuous and Religious, and make them useful to the World, as well as dutiful, and comforts to my Wife and my self. And I take care so to bring them up, and place them in order to their future subsistence, that they may have some honest and industrious way of employing their time, and maintaining themselves: especial regard being had to such a way of living, as I think, will be best for their Souls good. For I am not at all solicitous to leave them a great Estate, but only such a Portion as shall be an assistance and encouragement to their virtue, to their diligence and industry; but not a maintenance for their vanity, and an incentive to their Luxury; for that, may be a Snare, rather than a Blessing to them.

If I have Brothers and Sisters, though living far distant from me, yet I have a very particular concern for them, as being naturally parts of the same Family with my self, and are therefore in an especial manner the objects of my love,

love and of my care; and though I have no direct authority over them, yet I must never be wanting in good advice and admonition to them; and yet to all People of a good temper, advice and counsel, will go as far as commands or threatenings, especially if it be given with that tenderness and affection, which is due to persons so nearly related to me.

My Servants I treat with such gentleness and kindness, as may make them thankful to God, chearful in their condition, as well as willingly serviceable and faithful to me. For I look on them as Brethren, both by nature, and the Gospel, and that we are all Servants alike to the great Lord of all, and there is no respect of Persons with him. And he having committed these Servants to my trust, I not only take care for their food and comfortable subsistence here, but especially for their instruction, and the good of their Souls hereafter. And therefore, I not only frequently in discourse teach them their duty to God, and exhort them to the practice of it, but also I take notice how they come to the Publick Service, especially on Sundays, and Family-prayers every day, and always allot them some time every day, at least a quarter of an Hour, Morning and Evening, for their private Devotions, which I teach them to use out of the *Whole Duty of Man*, or Dr. *Patrick's* Devo-

Devotions; and I reckon it a great fault in Masters and Mistresses, so to hurry, and perpetually to employ their Servants, as not to allow them any time for the Service of God in private. But then this time that I thus allow them for their private Devotions, I make as sure as I can, that they thus spend it, and not in idleness or talk with one another.

To all my Family in general, I make myself as easy as I can, being not difficult to be pleased, and ready to forgive any slight neglect or fault: For I am sensible of my own infirmities and faults, especially against God, on the consideration of which only, I think myself bound to be mild towards others offending me; their offences against me, being against fewer and lesser obligations, than mine are against God, and I praying to God so often every day only to *forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me*.

As I contract not *friendship* or extraordinary familiarity with any bad man, or ill-affected to Church or State, both for the sake of my own reputation, and my own safety (an intimate acquaintance with a bad man, reflecting always on his Companions, and Vice being always very infectious): So when I do chuse a Friend, and profess any kindness extraordinary, I am not only real and sincere in my friendship without design

design or tricks, but make it a part of my study and business, that my friend may be the better for me. If I see any thing fit for him to do, I put him in mind of it, and advise him friendly; if I see him do any thing amiss, I admonish him also, and as kindly reprove him, which is no other than what I would have him do to me: If I can assist him in any business, I do it willingly and readily, and am not sparing of my trouble or ordinary charge for him; I reckoning it as one of the worst properties of men, who sometimes so love their own ease, that they will not so much as stir out of their Seat, to do another the greatest kindness. And though I am thus ready to help and assist my Friend, yet I take care always to perform more than I promise or put him in hopes of, or to promise less than I design to perform: For I consider the way of the World and temper of men, that their hopes and expectations do generally out-run their reasons; what they have but the least encouragement given to hope for, they in their thoughts, make themselves sure of; and therefore, by my doing more than I say for my Friend, or promising less than I intend, I both provide against disappointment which may possibly happen, keep him more at ease and rest, and yet shew my friendship to him as much. And the carriage which I have thus expressed,

I use

I use towards my Friends, or such as I choose out of the World, for a more intimate familiarity; I use it also towards my *Kinsfolk* and *Relations*, whom God hath as it were recommended to my Friendship and Acquaintance, by making them so by nature allied to me.

Towards all my Neighbours, that live in the same Parish or Town with me, of what rank or quality soever they are, and indeed to all that are not only Christians in general, but Members of the same Church and Nation with my self, I take care to discharge all the Offices of *Justice*, *Charity* and *Kindness*, that the Gospel requires of one man to another. And accordingly, I not only do them no wrong, by taking from them by stealth or oppression, by cheating or overreaching, by slander or backbiting; but I am strict to give them whatever by any kind of right belongs to them. Hence I make as much conscience to pay my debts, or what I justly owe to another, as I do, not to rob him or steal from him. As to Charity, I content not myself with giving only what I am rated, and so forced to pay to the Poor; but give also considerably as a free-will Offering of my own, according as I find any more than ordinary pressing occasion, (and such will seldom be wanting long to a Man that converseth in the World, and hath a mind to do good) and although the measure of

Charity

Charity is not defined in Scripture, yet I consider that the *Jews* were obliged to give near a fifth part of their yearly income to the Priests and Levites, and the poor: And I am sure that the general fault of Men, is, that they give too little, and therefore I will go a step further than ordinary; and scarcely any Man gives enough, that doth only give what is perfectly superfluous to him, what he doth not at all feel, and therefore I can scarcely think I give as much as I ought, unless I do at least somewhat abridge myself by my Charity. By such rules as these I govern my Charity, and by such Motives and Considerations, I stir up myself to it.

And though only a few perhaps need my *Charity*, yet I may and do exercise *Kindness* towards all, the Apostle commanding us not only to be *just* and *charitable*. but to be *pitiful* and *courteous*; to be far from the temper and practice of some, who love to provoke and inflame; for I esteem it my duty, as far as I can, to be civil and obliging to all, according to the Apostle's advice, for every man to *please his* Brother to *edification*: For this not only renders Mens lives more happy in themselves, but also conduceth much to the peace of the World: And when men are in good temper, they are better prepared, and more easily won over to any good, and not so liable to any Temptations of the Devil.

To

To all men, and on all occasions, I practise sincerity and hate deceit; and though I know it not necessary for me to tell every man all that I know or think, yet I will never tell any man contrary to what I know or think: For I reckon that falseness and deceitfulness is the last thing to be pardoned by God or man; and they that deceive others, it is just with God that they be deceived themselves, and it seldom fails, but that God takes such people in their own craftiness.

Though I know that our Law doth allow Suits for small things, and that if a man will, he may be troublesome to his Neighbours on many occasions which will daily happen, and which are perhaps just provocations, at least according to the custom of the world; yet I reckon my self bound to bear with many things, and not to take every advantage against my Neighbour, which the Law may bear me out in: For I am sensible that Human Laws do allow of many things that are not very becoming of a Christian. Nay, even if I be defamed and spoken ill of (though nothing is dearer to a man than his reputation) if I know myself innocent, I will take all prudent and Christian ways to clear myself; yet I will not let every passionate expression against me, be the occasion of quarrel, but rather pity the infirmities of human nature, than highly resent such misunderstandings and offen-

ces

ces that are taken, though unjustly at me. And I am sure that by my thus bearing patiently an unjust aspersion, I shall not only please God, but also win even on my enemies, who assuredly will see their error, and so according to *Rom.* 12. *I shall overcome evil with good.*

What *Estate* I have, I always reckon that it is not given me only for my own use, and to enjoy my self with, but especially to do good on private and publick occasions. And therefore, as on this consideration, I must not spend it all on my self, so also in *prudence* (though I abhor covetousness as much as prodigality, yet) I reckon I ought to live always below my income, though not niggardly, and so I make some provision and allowance for extraordinary cases and charges that will frequently happen. And in order to my full content of mind, and to prevent my using any unjust or unfit ways of enriching myself; in the first place, I make it my business so to regulate my passions as not to *desire*, and my way of living in the world as not to *want*, a great Estate or large Income: And then I have reason to hope, that if God should give me more, I should be both more moderate in the use of it, and employ it better than else I should do. And however scanty my fortune, or mean my station in the world is, (if I am not sinfully accessary to the bringing of my self into this

this condition) I am not at all ashamed of it, for poverty is no fault or occasion of shame; but I reckon that I may both be in the favour of God, and also benefit the world, if I discharge it honestly, and discreetly. But the more I receive from God, I always reflect how much more thankful to God, better in myself, and useful in the world, ought I to be than other men: And whether my Estate increase or decrease, or be more or less (unless by my own fault) I have always this consideration before my eyes, that the less I have, the less I must certainly give an account of, and this I am sure is the truest ground of contentment in every condition. As to the employment of my *Time*; I reckon it a great part of prudence, and much conducing to the happiness of life, so to accustom my self, that I may always have somewhat to do, that I may have some way of spending my time by my self, with usefulness and satisfaction.

And I not being obliged and forced to work all day long, as day-labourers and many Farmers and Artificers are, but having some time to spare from the exercise of Devotion in publick or private, the business of my calling, and the charitable offices that I have mentioned already; I take care to employ it as well and usefully as I can for others and my self, Time being a Talent which God hath intrusted us with,

and

and for the spending of which we must one day be called to a strict account. And besides this Religious consideration, I reckon it is one of the most miserable and unhappy conditions in the world, for a man to live so, as that his time is a burden to him; and yet it is the want of having some useful and handsome way of employing his time, that makes a Gentleman sometimes the most miserable creature in the world, and the only useless part of God's Creation. If the time of year or weather, or his health be such that he cannot Hawk or Hunt, he is undone; and therefore is almost forced to the pitiful shift of drinking, to pass away time, though to the loss of his Time, the *abuse of his Reason*, and the prejudice of his *Health*, and Estate. Now that I may never be at such a sad loss, as that my Time should hang on my hands, but that I may be able to spend a rainy day at home Soberly and to Satisfaction; and though I make no part of Learning my Trade or Business: yet I inure myself to some kind of study, as being sensible that all Knowledge and Learning, is the improving of a man's mind, is a very proper employment for a man's time, and will generally be of real use and advantage in Life.

And first, a Knowledge of our *Religion*, both as Christian in general, and as it stands distinguished from other kinds of Christian Religion in

in the world, is very necessary. For seeing the Salvation of my Soul depends on it, surely I may well allow it some share of my time and study. And true Religion being the will of God, it every way deserves my thought and contemplation; and by my understanding my own Religion well, I shall by the blessing of God, keep myself more steadily from being seduced into any ill opinion or practice.

After Religion, the Laws of our own country ought to be known and studied by me, and every man. For I shall often have occasion for a knowledge in the Laws. If I be a Justice of Peace, or if I be a High-Constable, Petty-Constable, or in any Office, Civil or Military, or if I be but empannelled on a Jury, a competent knowledge in the Law is necessary: That I may understand how far my power goes, what my place or office allows, or requires, what is expected of me, and what not; and this cannot be thoroughly known, without reading and studying the Law. Besides, by a little knowledge of the Laws, I shall be able perhaps sometimes to make up and compose differences among my Neighbours, prevent suits at Law, and consequently the ruin of Families, and breach of Friendship.

Besides these parts of Learning which are so necessary, I exercise myself in others, which I esteem

esteem proper diversions, commendable accomplishments, and which have their uses also in life: Such as are *History* and *Chronology*, both of the World in general, and also of our own and neighbour Nations in particular; together with the *description* and *Geography* of them. For some knowledge of this kind is necessary even in order to discourse, and for the understanding but the common news and relations of transactions in the world. There is no part of those Sciences which they call *Mathematical*, but is both useful and pleasant, improving and fining a Man's Reason, and serving to many occasions of Life; such as are *Geometry*, *Arithmetick*, *Astronomy*, *Navigation*, *Surveying*, *Architecture*, *Fortification*, *Art-Military*, all *Natural* and *Experimental Philosophy*. And besides these, by a man's understanding the *Anatomy* of his own body, by his having some knowledge of *Herbs*, some skill in the general grounds of *Physick*; he may be sometimes helpful to his poor Neighbour, when a Physician is not near, and may be able at least to pass a better judgment on his own, or his Children's and Family's distemper. These and other very useful parts of Learning, are sufficient to take up a man's Life, and there are good Books of all these Sciences in the *English* Tongue, and easy to be had, and which I can either learn by my self, or else with the direction

direction and assistance of the Parson of my Parish, or some other Learned Neighbour. And I cannot but reckon that man very stupid, that hath such a field of Knowledge before him, and yet knows not how to spend his time; and though I should perhaps have no great edge to any of these parts of Learning at first, yet let me but try them awhile, and I shall certainly find them the greatest diversion, and the most pleasant way of passing time that can be; and such a connexion is there among them, that if I do but mind any one Science or part of Learning with an appetite, I shall insensibly be drawn on to others, and find them necessary. And all these Sciences have both their *general* uses, to inform our ignorance, and prevent our being deceived and imposed on, to refine and improve our reason, to satisfy and enlarge our minds, and fit us for Discourse and Conversation; and also their *particular* uses, as applied to the several cases of Life to which they relate. And my having these so innocent and commendable ways of spending my time, will besides, have many advantages; it will keep my mind busy and employed, and even make me contented; I shall not have that uneasiness of mind, that an idle man hath, nor fall into those temptations, to which idleness exposeth men. I shall be some way useful to my Neighbour and the World,

World, adorn and cultivate my mind, and thereby set myself so much the farther above the Beasts, avoid many of those Errors and Absurdities, to which want of knowledge in these Sciences often betrays men; I shall hereby, be more fitted for any kind of Public Employment, Civil or Military: And I think it may go for a rule, that there is no part of good Learning, but a Man will sometimes have occasion for, and find useful, let his Employment or Quality be whatever it will.

But besides this way of employing of time in Reading and Study, it is confessed that it will be necessary also, for a Man to be sometimes in *Company*, when he visits or is visited, or is obliged to meet other men on any publick or private affair or business. And though these meetings do too often become a Snare, and draw Men into excess of Wine, Passion, &c. which therefore as we are Christians, and have Souls to be saved, we must watch against: Yet it cannot be denied, but that as being in company, and conversing with others, is necessary in the World, so it hath great and manifold advantages; it softens Men's tempers and makes them pliable, it reduceth the rules of Religion and Prudence into act, it cures the mind of that sourness or conceitedness, to which a very retired and Monkish person is too much exposed;

acquaintance and friendship is kept up by it, both private and public affairs are concerted, and much good done many ways. But then I take care what I can, to prevent or avoid the evils, into which keeping company often draws men. And therefore if I hear a rash word spoken, though against myself, I do not presently blow it up into a quarrel, but prudently pass it by; as supposing it is not the settled thoughts of his mind that spake it; I examine myself, what occasion I have given for such speeches; if I find I have done any thing amiss, I modestly own it; and if I have wronged him, I am not ashamed to acknowledge it, and beg his pardon: But if I find I am innocent, I doubt not but that he will in a short time see his error, and be ashamed of himself, and therefore he need not be severely rebuked by me. I believe not easily ill stories told of others, nor love to hear them, nor encourage the tellers of them; what Men's company I do not like, I neither publickly affront them, nor complain of them, but either bear it patiently (if it be such a company as I am obliged to be in) and so it will teach and inure me to get a conquest over my passions, or else I wholly abstain from it, but even this I do without making a noise, or being taken notice of, as avoiding such a Man's company.

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If I hear swearing or profaneness, obscenity or backbiting, I take the liberty some way or other, to shew my dislike of it; if before my Superiors, with a religious modesty; if among my equals, with freedom; if among my inferiors, with some kind of Authority. For all profane and obscene discourse, and reflecting on others, is really an affront and wrong to every Man; For every Man hath a right in *Religion* and *good manners*, and ought to see them vindicated. And as a Man should not suffer his Friend or Relation to be abused and spoken ill of unjustly, without some way appearing in his defence: So ought every Man to endeavour to vindicate Religion and good manners, according to the nature of the place in which he is, and the company with which he doth converse.

On this ground also I make it part of my business, when I am in company, as often as I have opportunity, to prevent misunderstandings, and to compose differences among men; And whatever I hear that may provoke Men against one another, I never divulge, but endeavour by all means to suppress; and so hope for the blessing of a Peace-maker, *Matt. 5.* I always make the best of, and put the most candid interpretation that I can, on what is done or said, thereby to keep People at peace, and to encourage good actions in the World. And the more

silently and secretly I do this, or any thing o the like nature, I esteem it is always the best; fo the less it is observed, it will always do the mor good, and will also be as sure or surer of a ful reward.

And though I confess I seldom play at an game, yet when a Man is in Company, to pleas a friend, and to avoid drinking, and speaking il of their Neighbours or the publick, I canno but allow of playing at some innocent Game o Recreation: But still whatever lawful Recreatio I use, or Game I play at, I observe such Rule as these, *First*, Never to let it take up eithe the most or the best, but only the refuse of my time, and the intervals of business and serious ness. 2. Never to spend on recreations, or t venture the losing so much, but what I ca well afford, and may lawfully lay out on my ow diversion, without streightening my estate, o abridging my charity (for my Charity must no be the less, but the more liberal, for what I spend in recreations? For if I can afford t *throw away* so much, it is always supposed tha I can *give* more). 3. Never to suffer myself t be put in passion, or out of humour at my losses or disappointments in these diversions; and therefore, never to design gain or profit, but health and recreation in them. And then I think there is no lawful Diversion, but may b safel

safely used sometimes; if I use it not too often, so as to make it my business and employment, and if I always observe a *Decorum*, to do nothing, though lawful in itself, at an improper time, or which is not fit for my age, place and station. For that may be fit for another, that is not fit for me; and I am so far from the common custom of the World, of censuring others for what they commit themselves, that I can very patiently bear with many things in another, which I will not take the liberty to do my self; for I can lawfully and commendably abridge my own liberty, but I cannot so well impose on, or charge, or censure others: There may be more excuses made for others than for me; and therefore in all doubtful cases, I choose rather to confine myself, than other men.

And by my thus managing myself in these little and common cases, I shall not only keep my Conscience clear, and live inoffensively before God and men, but shall also contribute to the keeping up Peace, and friendship, and good correspondence among Men, Members of the same Church and Nation: For I direct all my actions, as far as I can, to the publick good, and I always wish that the publick may flourish rather than myself; and wish that another may have this or that place or employment, rather than myself, if he will manage it better, and be more

more useful to the publick. And from this Principle also, I will even venture or part with all, to do real service to the publick, and am neither covetous nor timorous, wherever the good of the Publick is concerned. And however in a matter of a *private* concernment, I may yield up my own rights to please others: Yet in what the good of the *publick*, either as to Church or State is concerned in, I will by no means recede from my just rights, out of any kind of fear or complaisance; for in so doing, I should rob Posterity, I should rob not only my self, but all that I love most and that depend on me, and betray my trust, and lay a foundation for a publick mischief and ruin; and to be sure God will requite such injustice severely at my hands.

CHAP. VII.

An earnest persuasive to continue in the Church of England.

SUCH is my Belief, and such is my practice and carriage, according to the Doctrine and Commands of the Church of *England;* and therefore, I think a man but little understands Christianity, or hath not any peaceable inclinations, that finds fault with it, and that doth on any account separate from it.

For first, it is *the Church,* which is by all kind of Lawful Authority, *Settled* and *Established* in our Nations. And therefore, if there be any obedience due to any Commands of Governors in Church or State, Communion with the Church *established* here, is a duty; unless a man can shew any express Commands of God to the contrary, which a man will be so far from finding in Scripture, that he will find much there, to oblige him to continue in it. For where ever Government in general is established, and obedience to Governors enjoined, it ought to be reckoned

reckoned as spoken of our Government or Governors Ecclesiastical and Civil, as well as of any other in the world.

But we are not only obliged to communicate with the Church, because it is Established among us, but because we see it hath all right to be Established, as being so agreeable to Scripture, the Practice of all Antiquity, especially the first and purest, is so well fitted to answer the very end, and design of a Church, and pursues those ends so fully, as well as that it hath had a constant immemorial prescription among us. For at the Reformation, we did not begin anew to frame and form our Church, but kept the essentials of a Church which we found established, and only corrected those Errors and reformed those Abuses which had by degrees and length of time, or especially by the prevalency of the Bishop of *Rome* and his Agents, crept in among us. For as we were not Converted at first from *Rome*, so nor did we at first receive such a Christianity as is now taught and practised at *Rome*, but such as is now established in our Church. Nay we can shew that we were a settled Church before they came among us. They indeed brought a great many bad things among us, which we at last threw out; and in our Reformation we departed from them only, in what they had departed from the True Church

Church of Christ, and from themselves in the first Ages, as our Canons speak.

So that our Reformation was neither a *Schism*, nor doth it countenance any *Schismaticks*, or excuse any separation from ourselves. For we can shew that all that are born in these Countries are more under the Ecclesiastical Government of these Countries, and more bound to Communicate with us, than we are under the Bishop of *Rome*, or bound to Communicate with him: and they can never shew the like reasons and grounds of their separating or dissenting from us in Doctrine or Discipline, as we can for our Believing and acting otherwise than the Bishop of *Rome* doth. So that if any People, Born and Baptized in any Church under Heaven, have a duty incumbent on them, and ought to continue in that Church, I am sure we in *England* have at least so much as they have, or more. So that either there is no necessity of continuing in any Church in which men are Born and Baptized, or there is a necessity for us to continue in our Church.

Indeed we confess our case is on many accounts very hard, by reason of the several Adversaries that we have on either hand; but yet even this seems somewhat to speak for us, our Church being in this, like Virtue itself; which consists in a mean, between two extremes; or as King *Charles* the Martyr expressed it, like

our

our Blessed Saviour who was Crucified between two Thieves. For such, and so different are our Adversaries, that whatever we do, we are sure to be blamed and accused by one side or other. But as Mr. *Hooker*, Dr. *Falkner* and others, have abundantly made out the *Lawfulness* of all our Institutions, so he that considers what opposition is made against us on every side, and what provision we must make against objections, though of different and contrary natures, will see the *prudence*, and even *necessity* of whatever is enjoined among us. So it is confessed that by our retaining the *Episcopal Government* in our Church, we anger some; and yet if we had omitted or rejected it, we had more injured ourselves and our causes, and more justly offended others.

By our insisting so strictly on our *Ordinations*, we are liable to complaints from some: And yet if we did neglect and not insist on them, we should subject ourselves to juster Accusations. Our having a *Liturgy*, displeaseth some; but if we had not had a *Liturgy*, we should have angered more, and injured Religion. If we enjoin any thing, if it be but a *rite* or *ceremony* in the Service of God, some blame us; and yet if we should enjoin nothing, but leave all at liberty to do what they would, nothing could follow but Confusion.

The

The Ceremony of the *Sign of the Cross*, some blame us for using it so much, others blame us for using it no more: So that all men must needs see that it is impossible for us to live, without offence. Our wisest course therefore surely must be, next to consulting what is necessary for Religion, for us so to order things as to displease least, or seeing we cannot please all, yet to please some; especially those who seem to have more of reason on their side. And this is the rule which I think we have exactly followed. For there is nothing in our Constitution, against which exceptions are taken by any, but what we have, out of Christian Charity and Condescension, retained or enjoined, as far as we can, and as Christianity allows to satisfy and please some others of our scrupulous brethren. And I know no one thing though the most plausibly argued against by some, but would have been liable to greater objections if we had not ordered it so. And therefore, I verily believe there is no man that considers our case, puts himself in our place, and weigheth impartially Truth according to Scripture and Antiquity, and that would withal take care to provide against, and to avoid all the objections that this or that party of men makes against us, but will see a plain necessity for our enjoining and acting in every case as we do.

I am

I am not therefore startled to see some on all sides to oppose us, for I am sensible that if we acted otherwise than we do, we should render ourselves liable to greater opposition and contradiction on one hand or other. So for instance, if we used and insisted on more ceremonies, our other Dissenters would think they had more just reason to complain: If we used not so many, the Church of *Rome* would have greater advantage against us. Besides I consider, that nothing can be enjoined, much less can a whole frame of things be laid, but that some people may take offence at it, and objections may be raised against it. Therefore, the Rule that we go by in our Church is this, *First*, we take care that nothing necessary be omitted, nor any thing untrue be taught, or unlawful be enjoined, but that the whole frame of things may be so contrived, as shall conduce most to the advancement of True Devotion, and the rational and decent Service of God, Governing ourselves all along by the Scripture, expounded especially by ancient practice; for we would not have it said that we are such a number of men as never were in the world before, but that we are such, and so Constituted, as we are confident the Primitive Martyrs and holy men of old, would have joined in Communion with, we living by such kind of rules as they themselves practised,

practised. And *then* in the next place, we consult what will displease others least, or be least liable to mistakes and objections; for we comply with either side, as far as we can without forfeiting truth, or laying ourselves open to a just reproof and accusation. And accordingly, it is observable that some things we have abrogated, that were formerly practised by us, others we have changed and altered, and something we have recalled and revived, which was formerly omitted, and all this as we designed to gain the more, and do the more good; though so uncharitable have our Adversaries been, as even to charge this on us as a fault, and put a bad interpretation on this our so Christian Condescension.

On several other such accounts, do we justly think our Church very hardly used. It is generally very affecting to complain, and people naturally pity them that suffer, whatever the occasion is, especially it is popular to complain of what is established; it goes with many for a sign of Courage and of Conscience, for a man to find fault with the Publick. Now the Church of *England* being by Law Established, it can never want enemies for that very reason. If it be the Established Religion, it must have Laws for its fence and security. These Laws must have some kind of Penalties to enforce them, or else

else they signify nothing. If these penalties are inflicted, it affords matter of complaint and clamour; if they are not inflicted, yet they serve as well for men to complain of the severity of the Laws against them, and so they are great gainers by these Laws. For it is popular to plead Persecution, as well as advantageous not to suffer by it. Nay, our Adversaries gain Reputation against us sometimes by their suffering, though the most justly. For if they suffer for Sedition or Treason against the State, they will give out that they suffer *for their* own Religion, and *by our* Religion; and this is often sufficient to create pity towards themselves, and incense men against the Church.

I mention all this, that Men may see the common grounds of clamour against the Church, and may not be surprised at it, nor transported against the Church, by reason of it. For you see, whilst it is the established Religion (which I hope in God it will for ever be) it will and must be exposed to such kind of difficulties and objections, which every man must learn to consider, and endeavour to prepare and fortify himself and others against. For indeed it hath no other objections lying against it, than will lie against the best frame of things in the World, if established and made the National Religion. Of the best thing in the World, men may

may say, *it doth not please them, they do not like it*; but that ought not to go for an objection, unless they show their reasons of dislike; and I think that all the reasons of dislike which have been urged hitherto, our Clergy have so fully answered, as to be sufficient to take away all scruples out of the mind of rational and unprejudiced Men. Some other Objections have long lain on us, especially that of our inclinableness to Popery, and that we wanted only an opportunity to shew ourselves, and to bring it in. A few years ago it was both in Sermons and printed Pamphlets daily thus prophesied concerning us; but I hope that all Men now see how little truth there is in this, and that the Clergy of *England* are no friends to Popery. And yet if we consult the beginnings of Separation among us, we shall find, that the fear of our Clergy's designing to bring in Popery, was the Principal occasion and motive to Separation from us. And indeed whilst those fears lasted, there was some little ground for what they did, if their fears were real (though still they ought to have examined our Principles, and not to have judged so severely of us by way of Prophecy). But now I must needs say, I think they are bound in Conscience to return to us, the very Foundation of their dissenting and separation being taken away; or else they seem unexcusable

ble before God. For surely no conviction can be greater than this, which hath now been given of the Church of *England*'s being no favourer of Popery. And I hope in God, that seeing the main Objection is removed, they will have more of the peaceable Christian in them, than to study for new Arguments to justify their Separation.

And on occasion of this Objection, that lay so long against us, I must for God's sake beg of all men to take heed, especially of this kind of Prophetical Objections, that we *will be*, or *we would be so or so*, of *this or that Party*, if we had an opportunity; for this is an Objection that is easily made, and yet is scarcely possible to be answered, and therefore is on all accounts the most unchristian and worst kind of slanders. Indeed in reference to *Popery*, it hath pleased God in his wisdom and goodness to give us a full occasion and opportunity to shew and clear ourselves, and to evidence the falseness of that accusation. But now if we should be accused of being secretly *Jews*, *Socinians*, *Mahometans*, or the like, what possibility is there of our sufficiently clearing ourselves, unless they would that God should bring us into the same kind of Trials as to those Religions. But I see not what occasion there is for men to be put to *Prophesy* concerning us. The Doctrine of the Church of

England

England, is as legible, and as easily understood as that of any other Church in the World. Every man sees what opinions the Clergy are of, for they subscribe and assent to the Book of *Articles*, and *Homilies*, and to the Book of *Common-Prayer*; many have also some regard to the Articles of *Anno* 1640. They take the Oaths of *Allegiance* and *Supremacy*, and the *Test*, renouncing *Transubstantiation*, and other bad doctrines and practices of Popery, and give all the Security that one man can give another, of their reality and sincerity as to what they profess. And now for men to say, notwithstanding all this, that they are secretly, and in their hearts otherwise affected, and to Prophesy that they will, when they have an opportunity, introduce some bad Doctrines or Practices, contrary to what they now Profess, is most highly contrary to Christian Charity, is an usurping the place and prerogative of God, in judging of Mens thoughts; nay more, it is a condemning men beforehand, for what they will do, or at least for what others think they will afterwards: which surely is the most severe and unjust way of proceeding in the World.

Let us then be constant and persevering in the Profession of Religion, and the Doctrines taught in this Church, and in the exercise of Devotions used and encouraged in it. This is

the way, by the blessing and assistance of God, to keep ourselves from falling into any evil Opinion and Practice; whilst we continue in it, we are sure we are in God's way, and so may hope for his blessing. On a strict survey of the State of Religion in the World, I am sure I can find no particular Church, or number of Christians, but may have more said against it, than can be said against the Church of *England*. We give to the Word of God its supreme and Infallible Authority and Pre-eminence, and we give also to the Commands, and to the Institutions and Practices of good and holy Men their weight and respect, and deference also. In the Worship and Service of God, we keep the mean between Superstition or distracting gaudiness, and too great indecency and slovenliness; between burdensomeness and multitude of Ceremonies, and a want of becoming carriage and reverence before God. All things that are necessary or useful, we find here enjoined, taught and practised, and this without the mixture of any thing that is dangerous and hurtful. We are confident and sure of our own being in the right, but yet dare not condemn absolutely all that differ from us, as Reprobates; which though it is no excuse or security for them that are in a bad way, yet is a sign of our Charitable Christian temper. We received our Religion at first, as pure as any other

other Church, at length we found we had varied from the Truth, and then we reformed ourselves as to *Authority*, as regularly as could be; nothing being done among us by multitude or with tumult, but by the Supreme Authority of our Governors in Church and State, the King, Parliament and Convocation. And the *rule and method* by which we went and guided ourselves in our Reformation, was as good as was possible, Scripture the Word of God exactly and nicely examined, and especially as it is expounded by the Primitive Church: and nothing was done, or left undone, but what was agreeable to both. And we still desire to be tried and judged by the Scripture, so Interpreted by the Ancients. For if we in any thing now differ from the Ancients, it is only in such small things as they did differ in from one another, without breach of unity; or in such things as it is in the power of every National Church to appoint or alter, in reference to its own particular cases, and circumstances. And so very well assured am I of this, that all I would desire of the Enemies of our Church, is, that they would read the Ancient Fathers, or first Christian Writers, especially in the first Ages of Persecution, and then desire them to judge according to the Rules by which the ancient Church proceeded, whether they do not in their Conscience think, that those good

and Holy Men, if they had lived now, would have maintained Communion with us, and rejected Communion with them, and I dare be bound to stand to their own Verdict and Judgment. And as this is a matter of great comfort and satisfaction to us, so methinks to others, it must be but a melancholy reflection for them to find themselves such a kind of Christians as never were, nor would have been borne with in the World before. And as we were thus by good *Authority*, and by a *good Rule* modelled at first, so I thank God I think I can truly say, that we have in a good measure carried ourselves answerably to our excellent Religion. Perhaps History cannot give us an instance of so many Men acting so honestly, prudently and uniformly, against all Enemies on every side, and in the most difficult Cases, as the Members of our Church have done in this late conjuncture; they have had no consideration of their own Interest or safety in comparison of their duty. When our Clergy oppose *Rome*, we are sure they do it purely for Conscience, for it would be vastly more for their Temporal Interest, Power, and Authority, to bring in Popery. Whatever discouragements they have found, they still Preach up, and persuade Loyalty to the *King;* and by the Doctrine of Passive Obedience to Temporal Authority, keep People from Rebellion, notwithstanding

ing they have so often been jeered and abused with it: but yet out of modesty, seldom insist on the obedience that is due to *the Church* and Ecclesiastical Authority, though there is as much obedience due to her, as even to the Church of *Rome* from her Members. And we may be sure that God will vindicate, and require it as much, as if it were more imperiously insisted on. For Duty is not the less, but the more due, the greater the mildness, the forbearance, and the kindness is of them, to whom it ought to be paid. As Saint *Paul* deserved never the less respect and observance, though he did not use his Authority, nor take so much on him, as he might have done, as an Apostle of Christ; so a truly Christian and Apostolical Carriage, and Conduct in all these respects, cannot go without a most signal blessing.

And how possible soever it is for Salvation to be had in other ways, yet we are much surer and safer here, than we can be in departing from it. This is the way that God expects we should walk in, he having not only in his abundant Mercy placed us here, but also by all kind of Arguments recommended it to our Reason and Judgment. How unpardonable therefore must it be to leave this Church, how unjust to betray it, and not to maintain it, by all the lawful means that we are able, how accountable to God and Man

shall

shall he be, that occasions, contrives, or yields to the ruin of it!

But by persevering constantly in the Doctrines taught, and the Devotions practised in this Church, we shall please God, adorn our Religion, establish the Church, and get a great and lasting Blessing to ourselves, *which God of his infinite mercy grant, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.*

THE END.

PRINTED BY T. C. HANSARD, PETERBOROUGH-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

Lately Published, in Octavo, Price 10*s.* 6*d.*

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No. VII.

THE

CHURCHMAN'S

REMEMBRANCER:

BEING A

COLLECTION

OF

SCARCE AND VALUABLE TRACTS

IN DEFENCE OF THE

DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE

Church of England.

Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing.—Job viii. 8, 9.

Ο παλαιος χρηστοτερος εστιν. Luc. v. 39.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE EDITORS;
And sold by F. C. and J. Rivington, St. Paul's Church-yard; Hatchard, Piccadilly; Deighton, Cambridge; and Parker, Oxford.

1810.

Printed by Law and Gilbert, St. John's Square, London.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Editors of the Churchman's Remembrancer, in republishing the following tract, (at length submitted to the Public, after much too long an intermission of their labours, occasioned by a variety of circumstances which it would be of little avail to particularize,) are desirous of obviating one or two objections, to which, in the judgment of some readers, it may possibly seem liable.

As an Essay on the Church, it may perhaps be thought, that it is not altogether so full and compleat as might be desired. Larger treatises, more thoroughly discussing the subject, and refuting the arguments of gainsayers, might doubtless have easily been found. But these are, for the most part, less difficult to be met with, being already in the hands of many theological students; and it seemed to the Editors

desirable

desirable to bring forward some short piece, exhibiting, in a plain and convincing manner, a more succinct view of the subject, grounded on Scripture and ecclesiastical authority, and such as might easily be apprehended and retained. As one of that description, the following tract recommended itself to their notice. They found it, though not a copious treatise, yet, so far as the argument goes, satisfactory and conclusive. There is an originality also in the manner of treating the subject, which is calculated to excite attention; and the Author shews himself a well-instructed scribe, skilful in placing old truths in a new point of view.

But another objection may possibly be made to it, which it seems worth while, in few words, to obviate. This tract forms part of a series of Essays, written for the express purpose of vindicating Christianity against the scoffs of Infidels; and therefore may seem not altogether so well adapted for reclaiming the conscientious Separatist. But although the professed Unbeliever and the sincere Separatist are readily allowed to be characters of a very different description; yet too true it is, that, in many instances, their doctrines respecting *the Church* very closely approximate, and their language is nearly

nearly the same. Upon the subject of the Christian Church, considered as a regular and duly-constituted society under a proper spiritual government, Separatists of various descriptions continually justify their schisms in the manner, and sometimes in the very words of those who have contended against the whole system of Revealed Religion. The same arguments, therefore, may properly be opposed to the same errors, by whomsoever maintained; and the very words of him who exposes the sophistry of a Chubb, may, without any breach of charity, be addressed to persons of whatever persuasion, who have unfortunately imbibed a prejudice in favour of similar opinions. Much indeed it were to be wished, that every pious and sincere oppugner of Episcopacy (and we doubt not that many such exist) would soberly and seriously consider, into what sort of company his opinions have thrown him; and would entertain a suspicion, at least, that a point which the Infidel has always so assiduously laboured to overthrow, may possibly be found to be one that is really essential to Christianity itself.

Let any such person read, with an earnest desire of the truth, the following masterly argumentation of Lawrence Jackson, and we trust that,

that, with the Divine aid, he will be persuaded to become not only almost, but altogether, such a Christian as we verily believe the disciples of the Apostles and their lawful successors to have been.

London, June 6, 1810.

A

DISSERTATION

ON

EPISCOPACY,

SHEWING

IN ONE SHORT AND PLAIN VIEW, THE GROUNDS OF IT IN SCRIPTURE AND ANTIQUITY.

BY LAWRENCE JACKSON, B.D.

SOME TIME FELLOW OF SIDNEY-COLLEGE IN CAMBRIDGE.

A

DISSERTATION

ON

EPISCOPACY,

SHEWING, IN ONE SHORT AND PLAIN VIEW, THE GROUNDS OF IT IN SCRIPTURE AND ANTIQUITY.

IN the course of the foregoing work, the divine appointment of a successive Ministry has been in some measure shewn: but there was not room in that place for considering the Nature and Form of that Ministry, which has been the subject of some controversy among the professors of the Christian Religion, and has given those, who are of no religion, the opportunity of concerning themselves in that question. The Church of England has received great honour, even from the opposition, which has from time to time been made to her from all quarters.

It is an open confession of her being the *pillar and ground of the truth*, that all, who have departed from the truth in principle or practice, have thought it their interest to vilify and traduce, weaken and destroy her. Against this bulwark of Protestantism and glory of Reformation, the policy and force of *Rome* have been continually levelled, no stratagems have been left untried to undermine, no calumnies to blacken, no violences to torment, afflict, and crush her. This Church, apostolical in its constitution and doctrine, flourishing in learning, victorious in argument, defended by a thousand providences, adorned with the piety, wisdom, firmness, and even martyrdom of its members in the worst of times, is the eye-sore of Popery, against which her books, her sword has been ever pointed: while the various Sects, dissenting from it, have been unmolested, nay sometimes treated with complaisance, indulgence, favour, having such essential flaws and defects in their composition, as give no umbrage to the Court of *Rome*, confident of an easy victory over them, when unsupported by the dignity and excellence of the National Religion. Nay, some of them are justly believed to be the offspring of Popery itself, and one contrivance of that restless

restless party to divide a Church, which united, was sure to be triumphant over all her adversaries. There are historical facts, which set this above a mere conjecture, and it adds great strength to it, that most of these sects have been made serviceable to that cause, and have sometimes been soothed, and sometimes frightened, perhaps without their knowledge, into measures directly calculated to promote it. The passages of the last unhappy Popish Reign will be a standing mournful monument of this assertion.

The modern Infidel, the boasted enemy to bigotry and priestcraft, is perhaps a shoot from the same bitter root, a tool in the hand of the same implacable conspirators against the peace of our *Jerusalem*, a jesuit in another shape, and if not with his knowledge, at least in fact, is raised up to pull down the purest and mildest Ecclesiastical Constitution, in order to make way for the most tyrannical and corrupt. That this may not be thought mere fancy and vision, it may be observed, that Deism came into *England*, like other fashions from abroad, and our fine gentlemen are but a sort of second-hand wits and beaux. Deism has credibly been related to be the religion of

the Court of *Rome*, and some of the greatest men there and elsewhere, who have set themselves to maintain and propagate the errors of Popery, have been known to believe as little of the matter, as any other people. Our men of travel, who have brought over the way of building from abroad, without the reason of it, and commenced men of taste by doing absurdly that in a cold country, which is only convenient in a hot one, may possibly have borrowed this new way of thinking, with as little discernment of the political ends, to which it serves in the places from whence they had it. But however that be, Deiſm is certainly equally convenient for thoſe who, by pious frauds for their own advantage would maintain among the people a false religion, and those who, to indulge their ease or pleasure, would have none at all. It saves appearances, and prevents the universally odious appellation of Atheist, it leaves men at liberty to frame their own rule of faith and practice, and gives full play to every corruption of the heart and caprice of the head. God has been pleased to reveal his nature and attributes, that men might not fall into mistakes in a matter so essential to their direction in life, and the several offices of it;

it; and the duty of man is written in such large characters, that he who runs may read them. This once set aside, there will be in a sense as many sorts of gods, as there are men, and degrees of understanding and wickedness among them. When every one is to find and dress out his god, he will do it according to his whim and convenience, and will make him what he pleases, as easily as with a chissel out of wood or stone: the relation and fitness of things shall be as he chooses to see them, and his plan of duties, if he ever makes any, shall be sure not to interfere with his pleasure or his profit: his idol shall have as much of one attribute and as little of another, as he has occasion for; and his laws shall be easy enough, since the same person makes them, who is to obey them. I own, I do not expect to see this *rational* religion drawn into form and branched out into its respective heads, and conceive it can never be done, till some *Pope* of *Reason*, infallible like him at *Rome*, undertakes the work, and gives out his decrees from some new Vatican: and then I apprehend there must be new subscriptions, tests, and penalties, or there will be less uniformity than there is at present. I am told, the Infidels do not promise themselves the happiness

piness of this blessed change in their own days, but hope to leave it the invaluable inheritance of their children in the second or third generation. Indeed I am of their opinion, that considering the abilities of the present managers, they will find work enough for one course of lives, in demolishing the religions already in being, and think they are right in not subjecting their plan to examination, till all the rubbish of former buildings is removed, that there may be room enough for a religion of that benevolent latitude, as will take in all the inhabitants of the earth, good and bad, wise men and fools.

In the mean time, the industry of these gentlemen for the good of posterity can never be enough admired: sensible of the greatness of their work, they set all hands about it, and seem of opinion with some, to whom they would not willingly claim relation, that a good end will sanctify the means, and an intention to serve mankind will justify abuse, calumny, forgery and lies. The Church of *England* has the compliment of being thought to stand most in the way of this glorious revolution, and therefore has exhausted all the skill, and experienced the utmost rage of these new undertakers,

takers. Sometimes in the language of Puritans she is arraigned of intolerable arrogance in assuming to herself the name of the Church, in exclusion of far greater numbers of Protestants dissenting from her; sometimes in the language of Papists as a novel sect and creature of the Magistrate, she is accused of tyranny and usurpation; her impositions of Creeds and Tests are a violation of the natural rights of mankind, her Clergy are bigots, and her Bishops Antichrist: her writers are turned against each other and themselves, and the faults of foreign countries and former ages laid to the charge of this: her sons are represented as enemies to government, and Church and State must for ever justle and invade each other. The Infidel can shift his character with the occasion, now a furious zealot against all power, next for civil against ecclesiastical: one time full of conscience and cant, at another of profaneness and banter: sometimes for laying open the fences out of charity to the scrupulous, sometimes for tearing up foundations to let in universal liberty and unbounded licence: a violent declaimer against human inventions and additions to sacred writ: sacred, if a passage can serve the present argument; mere cheat and imposture, if irreconcileable

concileable with it. He is at times a Jewish Rabbi, a Mahometan, a moral philosopher, a rake, a fanatic, an allegorist, an enthusiast, a bigot, a statesman, a buffoon. One might be apprehensive, that all men of all persuasions, times and interest, had united their strength, and at once declared against Christianity as professed among us. But our fears vanish, as soon as it is discovered, that all these attacks are from one and the same quarter, and that it is the impotent Infidel still, though he chooses sometimes to conceal himself and appear in a different dress and assume a variety of appellations. This puts me in mind of *Quintius Flaminius*, the *Roman* General, in an assembly of the *Greeks*, who compared the pompous enumeration of the forces of *Antiochus* the Great, which were only so many soft *Asiatics* under a number of hard astonishing names, to an entertainment he had been at, in appearance of surprising variety, which nevertheless upon examination proved to be nothing but chicken, only differently tossed up and ranged to make a figure.

It is the peculiar happiness and distinguishing glory of the Church of *England*, to have retained at her Reformation that form of Church Government,

Government, which can be demonstrated to be at least of Apostolical institution; by means of which she is in possession of a regular, successive and authorised Ministry, Sacraments of unquestioned validity, and a covenanted right to all the protection, assistance, favour, and influence annexed to the Christian Religion by the great Founder of it, when he declared himself invested with all the power in heaven and earth, when he sent his Apostles into the world with commission to gather and constitute a Church out of it, with which he promised to be present to the end of things, and against which he engaged the gates of hell should never prevail. This light on an hill, this honour of his country, the modern Infidel has too weak eyes to see, or too vitiated to behold with patience: it thwarts his designs, and then incurs his hottest displeasure. He begins with reviling, and makes a shew of reading and confuting, and what is wanting in argument, is made up in declamation on assuming Priests and Ecclesiastical Tyrants. He, who hates all Christian Ministry, declares solemnly for a parity of Ministers; and he who denies inspiration and scorns the Bible, with great gravity quotes the Gospel for his purpose, and triumphs in the long

long since confuted arguments of a *Blondel* and his kindred writers. But to let you know, he will not rest here, and to shew his learning, he has found out from some glossary that the word ἐπισκοπος, in our language *Bishop*, denoted an officer among the Pagans, and we are threatened with terrible consequences from this acute discovery: such, I suppose, as these—If the name be of heathen extraction, why not the thing? If high priests and altars were the instruments of Idolatry, how can they consist with and have a place in Christianity? The division of religious societies into provinces and dioceses was in conformity with that of the civil government among the *Romans*, a human invention, a secular constitution, the result of ambition in the Clergy and weakness in the superstitious laity; and, therefore Exarchs, Patriarchs, Archbishops and Bishops, with other dignities and offices, founded only in the constitution of the empire, dissolved with it, and consequently have no other existence in any country, but what the Magistrates of it are pleased to give them. In the end we may possibly be told with a sneer, that the *Captain* of our salvation (a heathen name too) with all his inferior officers may be as easily cashiered, as

a captain

a captain of foot with all who command under him.

From what has been already started, and what may further be expected on this head, it may not be judged improper, to set this matter in a short, but clear light, that those may see the merits of this cause, who are unable or unwilling to search it out in the more elaborate and voluminous works of controversial writers. If so interesting an affair can be cleared in two or three sheets, I imagine it will be pleasing and useful to those, to whom the discourse may prove satisfactory, and not tedious even to those, who may not be convinced by it. The arts of lengthening out and industriously obscuring controverted points, together with the causes of them, are well known; and the honest art of contracting them to a few sheets of paper would be equally well known, and as usually practised, if men could be persuaded to lay aside prejudice, heats, and private views in the discussion of them, and were as eager to find out the real truth in any particular question, as to make a figure and obtain the victory of the last word in a dispute. I have therefore added this short view of the Ecclesiastical Constitution, as it has appeared to me in the Holy Scriptures, and as I have

have been able to gather it from the earliest and latest writers on that subject, without concealing or passing over the objections, which have been made to it. Without further preface, I shall address myself to make good the three following propositions:

The *First*, That CHRIST appointed *different* Orders in his Ministry, and designed, that of those whom he sent, some should be *above* others.

The *Second*, That the *Apoſtles* were in the highest of these Orders appointed by CHRIST, and received from him commission to erect and govern Churches, and settle a successive Ministry in them.

The *Third*, That the *Apostles* did so build and model the Churches they founded, that the Clergy and People of certain districts were under the direction of *single* persons, of an order and rank superior to all others, and appointed and were succeeded by *Bishops*.

The *first* proposition is, That CHRIST appointed different Orders in his Ministry, and designed, that of those, whom he sent, some should be above others.

To teach us this, it may be, our Saviour gave his disciples different commissions at different times: he did not endow them all at once

with

with all power, but raised them from one degree of it to another. The first institution of the Christian Clergy we meet with *Luke* ix. where, calling together those, whom he had before chosen to attend his person, *Mark* iii. 14, CHRIST gave them power to cast out devils and heal diseases, and sent them to preach the kingdom of GOD. Here we have one *Clerical* order: for to constitute such an one, nothing else is required, but that some should have a commission from Heaven to execute some *public religious* office. In *Luke* x, we read of other Seventy sent by our Lord, adorned with the same powers, and almost in the same words with the Twelve in the preceding chapter, whom therefore we place in the same degree of orders with them. These *Seventy* being no farther promoted by our Lord, nor dignified with any *new* commission, the *Twelve* were advanced still higher, and sent out with *freſh* and *new* powers and authority, which first our Lord promised to one of them, *Mat.* xvi. 19, and then conferred on them all, *John* xx. 21, and following verses: when he sent them, as his Father had sent him; when he breathed on them, and gave them the HOLY GHOST; and lastly, when in the most solemn manner he granted them the privilege of remitting

and

and retaining sins. Here we have *another* order of Clergy, *greater* than that before-mentioned. For as nothing more is required to constitute a *holy order*, than a commission from above to minister in *sacred* things; so to make *two* orders, nothing more is required, than that they should be *distinguished* by *different* powers: and to make one order *greater* than another, it is enough that one has *more* or *greater* rights than the other: which being the case of the *Apostles* by this Gift of the Keys and other powers, I suppose they were then raised to a *higher* order; higher than they themselves were in at their first promotion, and than the *Seventy*, who once were *equal* to them; whose advancement afterwards, of one to the *Apostleship*, and of others to the *Deaconship*, by the hands of the *Apostles* (if we may credit history) is a certain sign, the Apostles and They were not left by our Saviour in the same degree and order. This superior dignity of the Apostles above others their Lord perhaps signified and foretold, *Mat.* xix. 28, where in answer to *Peter's* question, *What they should have who had left all to follow him*, he says, in the *Regeneration*, *i. e.* the Messiah's new kingdom, *When the Son of Man shall be seated on the throne of his glory*, *i. e.* after

after his ascension, *They shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* That this promise related, in *part* at least, to *this* life, I am led to think for two reasons: one is, the parallel place in St. *Luke* xviii. 30, which expressly mentions this life, as the time when the Apostles should receive much more than they had left, as well as in the world to come, life eternal: the other is, that the disciples understood their Master to speak of some *earthly* dignity, as appears by what follows: the mention of *thrones* alarmed their old fond desire of secular grandeur. In the next chapter the two sons of *Zebedee* with their mother asked for the first seats in this new kingdom: which when the ten heard, *ver.* 24, they had indignation against the two brethren. That these all understood their Master of *temporal* greatness, is plain from his correction of them, which immediately follows, when he called them unto him, and said, *Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them,* &c. *but it shall not be so among you; but whoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whoso will be chief among you, let him be your servant.* But what is this? Do you not hear, say some, CHRIST himself denying *authority* and *dignity* to his

his *Clergy?* Among the *Gentiles* indeed it is so, but it shall not be so among *you:* I answer, I hear no such thing, but quite the contrary, from this passage; for teaching the disciples how they may become *great* and *first*, is not forbidding them to be so. In this place I find our Lord not denying all *primacy* in his Church, but shewing of what *nature* it is, and how it differs from that of the world: I see him warning his Clergy against *ambition* and love of *greatness*, but by no means saying, there are no *first* seats for those, for whom the Father hath prepared them. In a word, he does not bid them not be *great*, but calls upon them to be humble and useful, when they are so, after the example of their Master, who, though the greatest among the sons of men, ministered and gave his life a ransom for many. They, who are less moved by the authority of this place, may hear our Lord declaring himself more plainly in another, *Mat.* xi. where speaking to the people of *John the Baptist*, in the 11th verse, he says, *Among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven, is greater than he.* Where is a comparison between the greatest minister under the

Law

Law and the leaſt under the Goſpel ſtate, and this pronounced ſuperior to the other. If you endeavour to ſtrike out any other meaning from this place, you will find it not eaſy to do it, conſiſtent with truth and ſenſe: if you oppoſe to *John*, whom our Saviour calls ſomething more than a Prophet, a private Chriſtian not in the miniſtry, you deſtroy the oppoſition of miniſter to *miniſter*, and make a ſentence which may not be allowed true, that the *leaſt private Chriſtian* is in dignity, or any thing elſe, above the *greateſt prophet*. If you underſtand by the *kingdom of heaven* here, not the kingdom of *grace*, but that of glory, either the meaning is, that the leaſt Chriſtian in *glory* is greater than the greateſt prophet on *earth*, which is a very true, but alſo a very weak obſervation; or elſe, that the leaſt goſpel miniſter ſhall be greater in heaven, than the greateſt prophet, which is certainly very falſe. Since then no other ſound ſenſe can be given to this paſſage, let this be the meaning of our Saviour's words, that of thoſe whom he ſent, the leaſt in dignity and ſpiritual power was ſuperior to any ſent before his time. But *ſuperior* and *inferior*, greater and leſs, imply one another: ſince therefore our Saviour in this place mentions the *leaſt* of the

gospel ministers, he must also at the same time inform us, there were *greater*, and consequently that he appointed *different orders* in his ministry, and designed that of those, whom he sent, some should be *above* others: which was the first proposition I undertook to maintain.

The second is, that the *Apostles* were in the highest of these orders appointed by Christ, and received from him commission to erect and govern Churches, and establish a successive Ministry in them. Whoever acknowledges *degrees* in the Christian Clergy, will not think it unreasonable to place the *Apostles* in the *highest* of them, whom under the former head we saw rising from one order to another, passing by others, themselves exceeded by none, that we read of. It was certainly their province to erect Churches, to whom it was said by Christ, just before he left the earth, Go and make *disciples of all nations*, and that this happened to the Apostles we learn from *Mat.* xxviii. 18, &c. Again, they had the right to govern the Churches they founded, whom Christ sent, as he himself had been sent by the Father; to whom he promises a kingdom, as the Father had to him; who had a commission to sit on thrones, and exercise judgment, to open and shut heaven,

to

to retain or remit sins: but that our Saviour adorned his Apostles with all these privileges and powers, is plain from *Luke* xxii. 29. *John* xx. 21. *Mat.* xix. 28. and xvi. 19. *John* xx. 23. compared with *John* v. 22. *Isaiah* xxii. 22. *Mat.* ix. 6. *They*, lastly, were to establish a successive Ministry in the Churches, whom CHRIST commanded to collect, establish and govern a society, which should spread as wide as the whole earth, and last as long as the world: but these were the *Apostles*, as we learn from *Mat.* xxviii. and the other Scriptures above quoted.

It may perhaps be required, that what I have proved to be the rights of the *Apostles in general*, I should also shew to belong to them, not only *collectively* in a body, but to *each* in *particular*, lest it should be suggested, that they made a sort of *sacred college*, and had powers thus to govern the whole Church, which no *one* of them enjoyed over any particular district. Let us therefore prevent the objection. The power of the *keys* our Lord first promised to Peter *alone*, and afterwards gave it to *all* the disciples, as has been above shewn; that no one might be led to imagine, either that he gave to all the Apostles *collected*, what he did not give to *each by himself*, or to *one* of them, what he

did not give to *all.* That the Apostles *together* laid their hands on seven men, and thereby admitted them into a Sacred Order, appears from *Acts* vi. 6. But from *Tit.* i. 5. it is plain, *Paul alone* did this and somewhat more, when he appointed *Titus* at *Crete*, with commission to ordain Presbyters. Before the Council of *Jerusalem* for about twelve years after the death of CHRIST, that the Apostles resided in that city, did not go far from it, or at least returned often to it, appears very likely from Scripture and ancient tradition. But having then confirmed the Church in that place, and being mindful of their Master's direction *to go into all the world*, they divided the parts of it among them, and separated each to his respective province, and never afterwards, that we read of, met together again. When or how this division of their several charges was made, whether by direction of the *Spirit*, or their *own choice*, or lastly by *lot*, I shall not enquire. It is certain, that *Luke*, *Acts* i. 25. calls the portion of one Apostle a *lot*, as also a *bishoprick* at the 20th *ver.* taken out of the LXX's Version of the Psalms: from which when *Judas* had fallen, that no one province might want its *Apostle*, another was to be chosen, that he might go to his own place, or part

part of the world assigned to him. Hence *Paul*, *Gal.* ii. 8. claims to himself the Apostleship of the *Gentiles*, as he allows *Peter* that of the *Circumcision;* and in 1 *Cor.* ix. he says. *If I am not an Apostle unto* OTHERS, *yet doubtless I am to* YOU, *for ye are the* SEAL *of my Apostleship in the* LORD: that is, a *seal* does not more confirm the writing, to which it is affixed, than *you*, who are my work, put it past question, that I have a right to found a Church, and therefore am an *Apostle*. From which passage we learn two things directly to our purpose; one is, that the right of constituting Churches belonged to the *Apostles*, AS SUCH; for by this very argument *Paul* proves himself an Apostle. The other is, that this right did not appertain to the Apostles only, in a *body*, but was the privilege of *each* Apostle by himself; since we read here, that *Paul alone* exercised it at *Corinth*. And thus I think, I have established my second proposition—*viz.*—That the Apostles were in the highest of the orders appointed by CHRIST, and received from him commission to erect and govern Churches, and settle a successive Ministry in them.

I proceed now in order to the third proposition; which is, that the Apostles did so build and

and model the Churches they founded, that the Clergy and people of certain districts were under the direction of *single* persons, of an order and rank *superior* to all others, and appointed and were succeeded by Bishops.

The two preceding propositions, if proved, give light and probability to this, which is to follow. For who will wonder, if the Apostles established in the Church that *diversity* of order, which they knew agreeable to their Lord's intention? Can it be thought strange, they should leave to others the thrones on which themselves sat, and put those Christian societies under the direction of *single* persons, over which they themselves, as *single* persons, had presided and governed? Many arguments might be drawn from the *excellency* of *Episcopal* Government, to prove it to be of Apostolical institution; and that upon the authority of St. *Jerom*, who gives the Unity of the Church, and Prevention of Schism, as the reasons of this establishment all over the world. But I chuse to confine myself to facts, as the most unexceptionable evidence in this matter.

The Church of *Crete* being now spread through many cities of that island, an hundred, more or less, St. *Paul* set *Titus* over it, with powers

powers to correct disorders, and ordain others: for so he says in his Epistle to him, i. 5. *For this cause I left thee in* Crete, *that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city as I had appointed thee:* The Church of *Ephesus* was modelled in the same manner by the same Apostle, this being committed to the direction of *Timothy*, as the other was to that of *Titus*. For his first Epistle to him is thus directed, *The Epistle of* PAUL *to* TIMOTHY, whom at the third verse he had besought to abide at *Ephesus*, to forbid new doctrines, to judge Presbyters, to rebuke the faulty before all, that others might fear; and, lastly, to lay hands on those that were worthy, as we learn from the fifth chapter, nineteenth and following verses.

The same form of Church Government we find flourishing at *Alexandria;* where, according to *Jerom*, * *from the Evangelist* Mark, that is, from the times of the Apostles, *as far down as the Bishops* Heraclas *and* Dionysius, that is, as far as the middle of the third century, *the*

* Nam & Alexandriæ a Marco Evangeliſta usque ad Heraclam & Dionysium Episcopos, Presbyteri semper unum ex se electum, in excelsiori gradu collocatum, Episcopum nominabant, &c. *Hieron. in Epist. ad Evagrium.*

Presbyters

Presbyters *called, by the name of* Bishop, *one always chosen out of their own body, and placed in a* higher degree *and seat above them.* It is true indeed, the author speaks here of a custom *peculiar* to the *Alexandrians*, which did not prevail elsewhere, nor among *them* any longer than the times of *Dionysius.* What therefore was this *particularity* among the *Alexandrians?* To have one person set over them? This certainly was in common to them, with those of *Crete* and *Ephesus*, and was in use among themselves, both before and after *Dionysius.* Was the thing then, that the Presbyters of that city consecrated their Bishop? This is not said by *Jerom.* It is, indeed, said by *Eutychius*, a writer of the tenth century, but against the evidence of ancient history, which informs us, the first Bishop of *Alexandria* was ordained by *Mark;* the second by *Luke*, who are sometimes stiled *Apostles*; and the third by the *Bishops* of *Egypt.* The mistake of *Eutychius* is founded upon the false supposition, that there were no other Bishops in *Egypt*, besides him of *Alexandria;* the falshood of which supposition appearing from ADRIAN'S *Epistle* and many other ways, what is built upon it, falls of course. It remains therefore, that *this peculiar* custom of the *Alexandrians* was, not

not that they had a *Bishop*, or that the *Presbyters ordained* him; but that their Bishop was constantly one chosen *out* of the *Presbyters* of that Church; which usage having obtained there for about two hundred years, at last was set aside. We see, therefore, at *Alexandria*, from the infancy of that Church, a certain person set over it of a *higher degree* than others, by name a *Bishop*, before the times of *Dionysius*, chosen out of the Presbyters of that place, but afterwards chosen out of any others. But we need not be solicitous about this or that *particular* Church, when we have the same *Jerom* asserting that from the time * *parties* were making in Religion, and it began to be the language of the people, and boast to say, I am of *Paul*, I am of *Apollos*, I am of *Cephas*, (all which happened, it is well known, in the *apostolic age*) it was decreed all the world over, that *One* elected

* Antequam Diaboli instinctu, studia in religione fierent, & diceretur in populis, ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cephæ, communi Presbyterorum Consilio Ecclesiæ gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos, quos baptizaverat, suos putavit esse non Christi, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de Presbyteris electus superponeretur cæteris, ad quem omnis Ecclesiæ cura pertineret, & schismatum semina tollerentur. *In comment. in Epist. ad Titum.*

out of the *Presbyters* should be placed over the rest, to whom should belong the whole care of the Church, that so the seeds of *schism* and *faction* might be taken away.

Ignatius, an author who lived in the *apostolic age*, and was set over the Church of *Antioch* (if we may credit *Athanasius*, *Chrysostom*, and *Theodoret*) by *Peter* himself, could not be ignorant of the mind of the Apostle who ordained him, concerning this matter: he must have known what himself was, and what they were who lived cotemporaries with him. Let us see therefore what light arises on this question from those seven Epistles, which all the learned world now allow to be genuine. First then, it is plain, according to *Ignatius*, that by a *Bishop*, we are to understand a *single person*, of an order and degree *superior* to *Presbyters*, set over a *particular district*, or Church, with authority. Secondly, that there were *many* such Bishops in his age. As to the first of these, one of his Epistles is inscribed to *Polycarp*, Bishop of the Church of *Smyrna:* and upon every mention of *Presbyters*, or *Presbytery*, he speaks constantly of a *single* Bishop in that place. Again, He, who upon every mention of *Presbyters* and *Bishop*, always observes a *gradation* between them, and prescribes

prescribes a *different reverence* to the one and the other, he certainly puts them in a *different order;* but this *Ignatius* every where does. Let one place serve for many, that might be produced: it is in his Epistle to those of *Smyrna,* —— ' * All of you follow, submit to the ' BISHOP, as JESUS CHRIST does to the FATHER, ' and to the PRESBYTERY, as to the APOSTLES, ' and reverence the DEACONS, as the appoint- ' ment of GOD.' Lastly, He who asserts nothing in Church matters should be done without the *Bishop,* or, if so done, is of any force, and bids all give place and honour to him, *Presbyters,* as well as others, as to *God* the *Father;* he certainly teaches us that the Bishop is over the Church with *authority:* But all this *Ignatius* does in the Epistle before quoted. ' † Let no one do any thing in ECCLESIASTI- ' CAL matters, without the BISHOP: let that ' alone be accounted a valid *Eucharist,* which

* Πάντες τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ἀκολουθεῖτε, ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρὶ; καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ ὡς τοῖς ἀποστόλοις, τοὺς δὲ διακόνους ἐντρέπεσθε, ὡς θεοῦ ἐντολήν.

† Μηδεὶς χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου τι πρασσέτω τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. ἐκείνη βεβαία εὐχαριστία ἡγείσθω, ἡ ὑπὸ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον οὖσα, ἢ ᾧ ἂν αὐτὸς ἐπιτρέψῃ. ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος, ἐκεῖ τὸ πλῆθος ἔστω, ὥσπερ ὅπου ἂν ὁ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία.

' is

'is celebrated under the BISHOP, or by whom 'he shall appoint for that purpose. Wherever 'the BISHOP appears, there let the MULTITUDE 'be, that is, let that be deemed the true and 'authorised CHURCH, as where JESUS CHRIST 'is, there is the CATHOLICK CHURCH.' What *Jesus Christ* is to the *universal*, that the *Bishop* is to a *particular Church*. And again, in the Epistle to the *Magnesians*, —— '* And it be- 'comes you to pay all reverence and regard to 'the BISHOP, as I know your holy *Presbyters* 'do, yielding to and complying with him; 'but not HIM, but the FATHER of JESUS 'CHRIST, the universal Bishop.' These bold images may not be strained beyond their intention, which was only to import the *real difference* and *gradation* of the things compared, as far as the nature of those things will bear it. It is therefore plain, from the writings of *Ignatius*, what he means by a *Bishop*, viz. a *single person different* from the *Presbyters, and of a superior order to them*, set over some *district* or *Church* with *authority*. Now that there were *many* such Bishops in the time of *Ignatius*, we learn from

* Πρέπει πᾶσαν ἐντροπὴν αὐτῷ ἀπονέμειν, καθὼς ἔγνων καὶ τὺς ἁγίους πρεσβυτέρους. Συγχωρῦντας αὐτῷ, οὐκ αὐτῷ δὲ, ἀλλὰ τῷ πατρὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τῷ πάντων ἐπισκόπῳ.

the

the same Epistles: Himself at *Antioch*, at *Smyrna* *Polycarp*, at *Ephesus Onesimus*, at *Magnesia* *Damas*, another at *Philadelphia*, and another at *Tralles*. If you ask, whence all these took their *original*, the same author will tell you in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*: † JESUS CHRIST *is the appointment of the* FATHER, *as also* Bishops, *made all over the world, are the appointment of* JESUS CHRIST. There is therefore an end of this controversy, if we listen to *Ignatius*, who plainly affirms, that *true Bishops*, such as he above describes, were established, not only in some *particular* places mentioned in these Letters, but *all over the world*, and that by *Christ's* appointment, either by himself, or his Apostles.

Polycarp, himself a martyr, ordained Bishop of *Smyrna* by the Apostles (as *Irenæus*) by St. *John* (as *Tertullian* says) collected, recommended, and dispersed these Epistles of *Ignatius*, whom therefore we may safely reckon, as of the same dignity, so also of the same opinion with their author.

Irenæus, when a boy, saw *Polycarp* an old man: why therefore may he not be supposed to have learned from him, or from these Epistles,

† Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τοῦ πατρὸς ἡ γνώμη, ὡς καὶ οἱ ἐπίσκοποι, οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὁρισθέντες, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώμη.

what

what he says in his fifth Book against Heresies. * *All these innovators are later than the* BISHOPS, *to whom the* APOSTLES *delivered the* Churches.

Let us hear *Tertullian* on this head, a writer near about the same time. ' † As the Church ' of *Smyrna* records *Polycarp* placed there by ' *John*, so the other Churches also exhibit to ' you those, whom, being constituted Bishops ' among them by the Apostles, they hold as the ' propagators and conveyers of the Apostolical ' seed to them.' The purport of which passage, I take to be, that by means of an *Episcopal Ministry* in a continual succession mounting up to the *Apostles*, the several Christian Societies of the world conceived they have derived down to them all the saving doctrines, ordinances, and privileges of the Gospel, which are the seed planted first by the Apostles, and propagated to after-ages by this Ministry of their own institution.

* Omnes ii novatores posteriores sunt quam Episcopi, quibus Apostoli tradiderunt Ecclesias. *Contra Hæres. lib. 5. cap.* 20.

† Sicut Smyrnæorum Ecclesia Polycarpum ab Johanne collocatum refert, utique & cæteræ exhibent, quos ab Apostolis in Episcopatum constitutos, Apostolici seminis traduces habent. *De Præscr. cap.* 32.

' With

With him agrees St. *Cyprian:* * 'Our Lord 'Jesus Christ, whose precepts we ought to re- 'verence and observe, marking out and settling 'the Episcopal dignity and model of his Church, 'says in the Gospel to *Peter*, I will give you 'the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, *&c.* 'From thence, by a continual succession, the 'ordination of Bishops and the manner of go- 'verning the Church runs down to our times, 'so that the Church is built upon Bishops, and 'every ecclesiastical act is directed and ordered 'by them.'

I will not go on to recite a catalogue of great and venerable names, for two hundred years, as low as to *Jerom*, all asserting the same truth, and putting it beyond all reasonable doubt. But out of *Jerom* himself, being claimed as the great champion of *the Presbyterian* side of this question, I shall set down a few passages. On the

* Dominus noster, cujus præcepta metuere & observare debemus, Episcopi honorem & Ecclesiæ suæ rationem disponens, in Evangelio loquitur, & dicit Petro, Tibi dabo Claves regni cœlorum, &c. Inde per temporum & successionum vices Episcoporum ordinatio & Ecclesiæ ratio decurrit, ut Ecclesia super Episcopos constituatur, & omnis actus Ecclesiæ per eosdem gubernetur. *Ep.* 27.

45th Psalm he has these words: '* Now be-
'cause the Apostles are departed out of the
'world, you have in their stead the *Bishops*
'their sons: these also are thy *Fathers*, because
'thou art *governed* by them.' Again, '† *Christ*
'has constituted *Bishops* to be the *heads* and
'*governors* of the Church throughout the ut-
'most bounds of the world.' But plainer yet in another place, and as if he set himself to prove our point for us; he says, '‡ *James* im-
'mediately after the Lord's ascension being
'ordained *Bishop* of *Jerusalem* by the *Apostles*,
'took upon him the charge of that Church:
'*Timothy* was ordained by St. *Paul*, Bishop of
'the *Ephesians*, as was *Titus* of *Crete*, and
'*Polycarp* by St. *John* of *Smyrna*.' Since therefore he, who is called our adversary, bears such

* Nunc quia Apostoli a Mundo recesserunt, habes pro his Episcopos filios——sunt & hi Patres tui, quia ab ipsis regeris.

† Ibidem. Constituit Christus—in omnibus finibus Mundi Principes Ecclesiæ Episcopos.

‡ Jacobus, ab Apostolis statim post ascensionem Domini Hierosolymorum Episcopus ordinatus suscepit ecclesiam Hierosolymæ. Timotheus a Paulo Ephesiorum Episcopus ordinatus, Titus Cretæ, Polycarpus a Johanne Smyrnæ Episcopus ordinatus. *De Script. Eccles.*

ample

ample testimony to our cause, I think we may subscribe to the truth of my third proposition, that it appears from Scripture, and the most ancient records of the Church, that the *Apostles* did so model the Churches they founded, that certain *districts* were under the direction of *single* persons, of an order and rank superior to all others, and appointed, and were succeeded by *Bishops.*

When a thing is once proved by undeniable matters of fact, objections founded in mere conjecture, will not overturn or shake it. Nevertheless I am engaged by my promise, and think it ingenuous, not to pass over unmentioned and unanswered what has been said against the plan of Church Government here exhibited:

I think therefore myself obliged, before I finish this view of Church Government by *Bishops,* to consider the argument for an *Equality* of Christian Ministers, built upon the interpretation of some passages of *Scripture,* and on which all the strength of the *Presbyterian* cause seems to lean: which once removed, our adversaries will have nothing to oppose to the truth of my third proposition, besides one or two writers, and those either ill quoted, or worse explained, contradictory to *themselves,* as well as

to all others. The argument, I mean, is this; first, in the *Scriptures* they see a mutual communication of the *names*, *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, and thence endeavour to prove an *identity* of *order* between them. The same men, say they, in the sacred writings are called *Bishops* and *Presbyters;* there was therefore anciently but *one order* of men, marked out indifferently, sometimes by this and sometimes by the other title. For why should they call those *Bishops* who were *Presbyters*, or those *Presbyters* who were *Bishops*, if *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were not common names of the same *order* and *degree?* Chrysostom, who observed this *confusion* of *names* in the sacred writings, was not so quick-sighted as to perceive the force of this argument. A communication of *names* between *Bishop* and *Presbyter*, indeed, he says, did obtain in the *Apostolical* times: but in the same place he denies, for all that, there being but *one order*. With whom *Theodoret* agrees on the *1st Tim.* iii. The same persons, at the time the *Apostles* wrote, were called both *Presbyters* and *Bishops*. What then? Was there at that time but *one order* of Ministers *equal* to one another? The very contrary to this the Author asserts, *viz.* that then there were *Bishops*, *true* Bishops, such

such as were in his own times. '* Those who ' are now stiled *Bishops*, they then called ' *Apostles*: but in process of time, they left the ' name of *Apostles* to those who were *really* ' such, and affixed the appellation of *Bishops* ' to those, whom before they used to call ' *Apostles*: thus *Epaphroditus* was the Apostle ' of the *Philippians*, thus also *Titus* of the ' *Cretans*.' At the time, therefore, of the Apostle's writing to *Titus*, according to this Author, when the names of *Bishop* and *Presbyter* were confused, there were however *single* persons, set over the Churches of *particular districts*, as at *Philippi*, *Epaphroditus*; in *Crete*, *Titus*; who were first called *Apostles*, and afterwards *Bishops*. Vain therefore, are all attempts to prove, there were not *different orders* of Clergy in the times of the Apostles, because they were not then distinguished by the same names, as now: for our position stands unhurt and safe, if it appears, that the *Apostles* set *single* persons to preside over *particular districts*

* Τὰς νῦν καλεμένας ἐπισκόπους ἀποστόλους ὠνόμαζον· τῷ δὲ χρόνῳ προϊόντος, τὸ μὲν τῆς ἀποστολῆς ὄνομα τοῖς ἀληθῶς ἀποστόλοις κατέλιπον, τὴν δὲ τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς προσηγορίαν τοῖς πάλαι καλεμένοις ἀποστόλοις ἐπίθεσαν· ὕτω Φιλιππησίων ἀπόστολος ὁ Ἐπαφρόδιτος ἦν, ὕτω Κρήτων ὁ Τίτος.

 with

with *authority* and *distinct powers*, whatever names they were called by.

But, farther, This mutual communication of *names* from *Bishop* to *Presbyter*, and *Presbyter* to *Bishop*, you will, perhaps, no where find in the sacred writings. This is Dr. *Hammond*'s observation, and carries with it great probability, but I shall submit it, after I have proposed it, with the reasons to support it. That *Bishops*, that is, *single* persons set over *particular districts* with power to *govern* and *ordain*, were called *Presbyters*, may not be denied, when we call to mind, that *Peter* stiles himself an *Elder* or *Presbyter*, 1 *Epist.* v. to whom may be added, if you please, *John* the Elder to the Elect Lady: when we remember also that *Presbytery*, whose hands together with *Paul*'s were laid on *Timothy;* and those *Presbyters* and *Apostles* at *Jerusalem* sitting in judgment on Ecclesiastical affairs, where *James* Bishop of that see presided. To this may be added, that *Ignatius* in his Epistle to the *Philadelphians*, calls the *Apostles* themselves the *Presbytery*. But that *Presbyters*, properly speaking, of the *second* order (more of which than one might belong to a Church) were called in their turn *Bishops*, does not certainly appear from any place of *Scripture*.

For

For the *Presbyters* of the Church, whom, *Acts* xx. St. *Paul* summoned from *Ephesus* to *Miletus*, and charged to take care of the flock, over which the *Holy Ghost* had made them *Overseers* or *Bishops*, were true and proper Bishops of the Church scattered through the province of *Asia*, each over his *particular district;* as appears from St. *Paul*'s speech to them, and from *Irenæus*, who interprets the place in this manner. It does not, therefore, appear from this passage, that *Presbyters*, of whom there may be many in a *particular* Church, are called *Bishops*. But it will appear, they say, clear as light, from the beginning of the Epistle to the *Philippians:* for thus it opens: *Paul and Timotheus to all the Saints in* CHRIST JESUS *which are at Philippi, with the* BISHOPS *and* DEACONS. Is it not evident they urge, that *Bishops* here must be understood of *Presbyters* properly so called, of whom there may be *many* in the *same* Church? Can there be more *Bishops*, properly so called, than *one* in the *same* city? If we should say, there might and there were, we should not speak without authority. For so *Epiphanius——Alexandria never had two Bishops, as some other cities had.* It is a generally received opinion, that the *Apostles* in some places instituted

instituted two Bishops, one to preside over the *Jewish*, the other over the *Gentile* Church there, until in time both united under one. This might be the case at *Philippi*. But say it was not, and there was but one Bishop of that place, as indeed there was but one, now absent with St. *Paul* at *Rome;* who can peremptorily pronounce, that those Bishops, whom *Paul* salutes at the entrance of this Epistle, were not the Bishops of other places, but residing for that time at *Philippi?* But they pursue the thing farther.—If the *Philippian Presbyters* are not there included in the name of *Bishops*, the Apostle passes them by: for after the *Bishops* no mention being made of the *Presbyters*, he passes on to salute the *Deacons*. Let it be so; perhaps he did not salute the *Presbyters* of that place, because there might be none yet established there. The same answer may suffice to 1 *Tim.* iii. where after directions to *Bishops*, the Apostle passes on to instruct the *Deacons:* because, perhaps, there were in those Churches as yet no *Presbyters* of the second order. From these and other passages it may indeed be concluded, that the *single* men, who presided over Churches, were sometimes called *Presbyters:* but neither from these, nor any other, can it with certainty be con-

concluded,

concluded, that *Presbyters*, of which there might be *many* in *one* Church, were ever called *Bishops*. But from such a communication of names what I pray will follow? That the *Apostles* and *Bishops* were *Presbyters*, because they are called so? I grant it, and that they were *Deacons* too, if you please, because the *Apostleship* is called in the *Acts* the *Diaconate*. What harm in all this to our proposition? Unless this way of arguing shall be held convincing; the *Apostles* and *Bishops* were *Priests* and *Deacons*, because they are called so, therefore the *Deacons* are *Presbyters*, and the *Priests*, *Apostles* and *Bishops*, though the *Deacons* are never called *Priests*, nor the *Priests Bishops* and *Apostles*. However,

It must be remembered, the dispute is about *things* not *names*: though therefore, they cannot *prove* it, suppose we *grant* our adversaries as great a confusion and promiscuous use of these names as they desire, I do not see what advantage it will be of to their cause. For in the *Apostolical* times, either there were *two* orders of superior Clergy, to both which the titles of *Bishop* and *Priest* were given, or there was *one* only order under this double name. If they grant us *two* orders, that one was not superior

to

to the other will never follow from their having each the same names given them: if they allow us but *one* order, that one order must be that of *Bishops*, properly so called, to which the second order of *Priests*, properly so called, was superadded in time; since it appears by undeniable facts, that the *Apostles* did place such *single* persons as we now call *Bishops*, over the Churches of a *particular* district, with such spiritual powers as they now exercise. So that whatever becomes of the *second* order of Clergy, concerning the *first* there is no doubt, but that it was of *Apostolical* appointment. This is indeed that very plan of the first Churches, which *Clemens Romanus* gives us: 'The Apostles, *says he*, 'sent by CHRIST, as himself by GOD, * preaching throughout the countries and cities, ordained their first converts *Bishops* and *Deacons* 'of those who should hereafter believe.' That is, the Apostles provided for Churches, as yet unborn, by appointing every where *Bishops* with their assistant *Deacons*, who should provide Ministers for future congregations. The account here given by *Clemens* of the provision made

* Κατὰ χώρας καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες, καθίσανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν.

for

for Churches not yet born, is exactly agreeable to that which *Epiphanius* gives us of Churches not yet grown up to maturity, many of which, small at the beginning, and contained perhaps within the walls of a private house, had only *Bishops* with their *Deacons* to take care of them. ‘ * Where, says he, there was not found a per- ‘ son worthy of a *Bishoprick*, that place was ‘ without a *Bishop:* but where there was occa- ‘ sion, and persons appeared worthy of the ‘ *Episcopate*, there Bishops were constituted: ‘ but through the paucity of believers, there ‘ were not found among them persons to be ‘ constituted *Presbyters*, and therefore they ‘ were ministred to by the *Bishop* of the place ‘ alone: but without his *assistant Deacon* a ‘ Bishop cannot be.’ In some places therefore a *Bishop* with his *Deacon* was thought sufficient for a new founded Church: but as the offices of Religion increased with the numbers of the believers, the Churches had their complement of

* Νέω ὄντος τοῦ κηρύγματος, &c. ὅπου ἐκ ἐυρέθη τις ἄξιος ἐπισκοπῆς, &c. ὅπου δὲ γέγονε χρεία, καὶ ἦσαν ἄξιοι ἐπισκοπῆς, κατεςάθησαν ἐπίσκοποι· πλήθους δὲ μὴ ὄντος, οὐκ ἐυρέθησαν ἐν αὐτοῖς πρεσβύτεροι καταςαθῆναι, καὶ ἠρκέσθησαν ἐπὶ τῷ κατὰ τόπον μονῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, ἕνεν δὲ διακόνου ἐπίσκοπον ἀδύνατον εἶναι. Contra Aerium lib. 3.

Clergy

Clergy, by the addition of *Presbyters* of the second order. To this agrees what * *Eusebius* from *Clemens Alexandrinus* relates of the Apostle St. *John*, who, being requested at his return from exile to *Ephesus*, went about the neighbouring provinces, in some places to make Bishops, in some to settle whole Churches, in others to ordain to the ministry a single person out of those, who were pointed to by the Spirit.

It must not here be concealed, that *Jerom* indeed represents the ancient Church in a different figure, supported by no other argument, than the promiscuous use of the names *Bishop* and *Presbyter* in the texts above explained. He asserts, there was originally but *one order* of Clergy in the Church, and that not the *first*, but the *second*. ' † PRESBYTER and BISHOP, ' says he, is the same: but when it was said, I ' am of *Paul*, I of *Cephas*, it was otherwise

* Ἐπειδὴ γὰρ τοῦ τυράννου τελευτήσαντος, ἀπὸ τῆς Πάτμου μετῆλθεν εἰς τὴν Ἔφεσον, ἀπῄει παρακαλούμενος καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ πλησιόχωρα τῶν ἐθνῶν ὅπου μὲν ἐπισκόπους καταστήσων, ὅπου δὲ ὅλας ἐκκλησίας ἁρμόσων, ὅπου δὲ κλήρῳ ἕνα γέ τινα κληρώσων τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ πνεύματος σημαινομένων. Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 3.

† Idem est ergo Presbyter, qui & Episcopus, & antequam Diaboli instinctu, &c. alibi, quid enim facit excepta Ordinatione Episcopus, quod Presbyter non facit?

' decreed

decreed all over the world, and one was set over the rest.' And again, 'It may be thought, this is not the doctrine of *Scripture*, but my private opinion, that *Bishop* and *Presbyter* is the same, the one name signifying the *age*, the other the *office* of the person;' and then he brings the Scriptures above considered to prove his point. How fairly his premises justify his conclusion, I have already shewn. But true or false, this plainly, when he was heated with the controversy and under personal injuries, was his opinion, that at first there was but *one order* of Ministers, called indifferently *Bishops* and *Presbyters*, and these not of the *first*, but *second* rank, such as admitted *plurality* in the same Church: but after there grew dissension and parties in Religion, the order of *Bishops*, as we now call them, was introduced. But there were *parties* in Religion, both while the *Apostles* lived and after their death: if therefore *Jerom* asserts this innovation to have happened while the *Apostles* lived; however he might be mistaken, he certainly is not against our proposition, since he says *Bishops* were instituted, the *Apostles* themselves, seeing, approving, directing it, and consequently that they were of *Apostolical appointment:* but if he means that this happened in

in the dissentions following the Apostles' death, he indeed bears witness against us: but at the same time his witness runs opposite to all the writers who went before him, and what is worse, overthrows his own express testimony in other places, which abundantly and clearly assert, that *Bishops* were appointed by the *Apostles themselves.* But a witness, who in a heat contradicts all others, and what he himself, when cool, had asserted, may justly be set aside, as incompetent and suspect in the case.

It is utterly impossible to make this writer's opinion quite consistent with truth, because it is irreconcileable with early undeniable facts of single persons set over large districts by the Apostles, and vested with the powers of governing and ordaining others: but it is possible to bring it nearer to truth, than at first sight may appear, and so make him less at variance with himself and all other people. It is plain from the foregoing view, that the Churches at first had not all their full complement of Clergy: in some there was a Bishop only with his assistant Deacons, in others Presbyters without a Bishop, for want of a proper person, who must therefore preside, till such proper person was found. The Apostles themselves exercised the office of Bishops

in many places, and in their necessary absence, the Presbyters of those Churches might be intrusted with the direction of them. The proper Bishop of a Church was sometimes called away to assist an Apostle in another place, as *Epaphroditus* Bishop of *Philippi* was at *Rome* with St. *Paul*, when he wrote his Epistle to that province: and in this case also the Presbyters might become the ruling Clergy for that time. Schisms and factions, such as are spoken of by *Jerom*, might arise from hence, and determine the Apostles to fill up vacancies, and fix proper Bishops wherever they were not before, for a remedy to this evil. And this may be the author's meaning, when he says, at the time parties were made in Religion, it was decreed all the world over, that one elected out of the Presbyters should be placed over the rest, to whom should belong the whole care of the Church, that so the seed of schism and faction might be taken away.

If this accommodation of the author with himself, with facts, with the rest of the Christian world, be admitted, his assertions, though delivered with warmth and mixed up with some mistakes, may appear not wholly without foundation. But if this is not admitted, he must stand

stand by himself, confuted by himself, and all the writers on this subject for near four hundred years together, and particularly by that holy Martyr, who was nearest the fountain of truth, who, as *Chrysostom* acquaints us, lived while our Saviour was on earth, conversed intimately with the Apostles, αὐτοῖς ἐντραφεὶς, καὶ τῶν πνευματικῶν ναμάτων ἀπολαύσας, καὶ ῥητῶν καὶ ἀποῤῥήτων αὐτοῖς κοινωνήσας τοσαύτης εἶναι δόξας αὐτοῖς ἀρχῆς ἄξιος, καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἁγίων ἐκείνων τὴν ἀρχὴν ταύτην ἐγχειρισθεὶς (Καὶ γὰρ αἱ τῶν μακαρίων ἀποστόλων χεῖρες τῆς ἱερῆς ἐκείνης ἥψαντο κεφαλῆς) who was ordained by the hands of the blessed Apostles, and therefore could not be mistaken in this matter.

How great soever therefore the confusion and indistinction of the names of *Bishop* and *Priest* may be in the sacred writings; whether *Jerom* be for us, or against us; I think the proposition undertaken stands safe and uninjured, which therefore give me leave to repeat as a vindicated truth, that the *Apostles* did so build and model the Churches they founded, that *certain districts* were under the direction of *single* persons, of an order and rank *superior* to all others, and appointed and were succeeded by *Bishops*.

I have taken the liberty to give the plain obvious sense, rather than a literal translation,

tion, of the passages which have been above produced, and am not conscious to myself of having abused this liberty, in order to serve an hypothesis.

FINIS.

Printed by Law and Gilbert, St. John's Square, London.

No. VIII.

THE

CHURCHMAN'S

REMEMBRANCER:

BEING A

COLLECTION

OF

SCARCE AND VALUABLE TRACTS

IN DEFENCE OF THE

DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE

OF THE

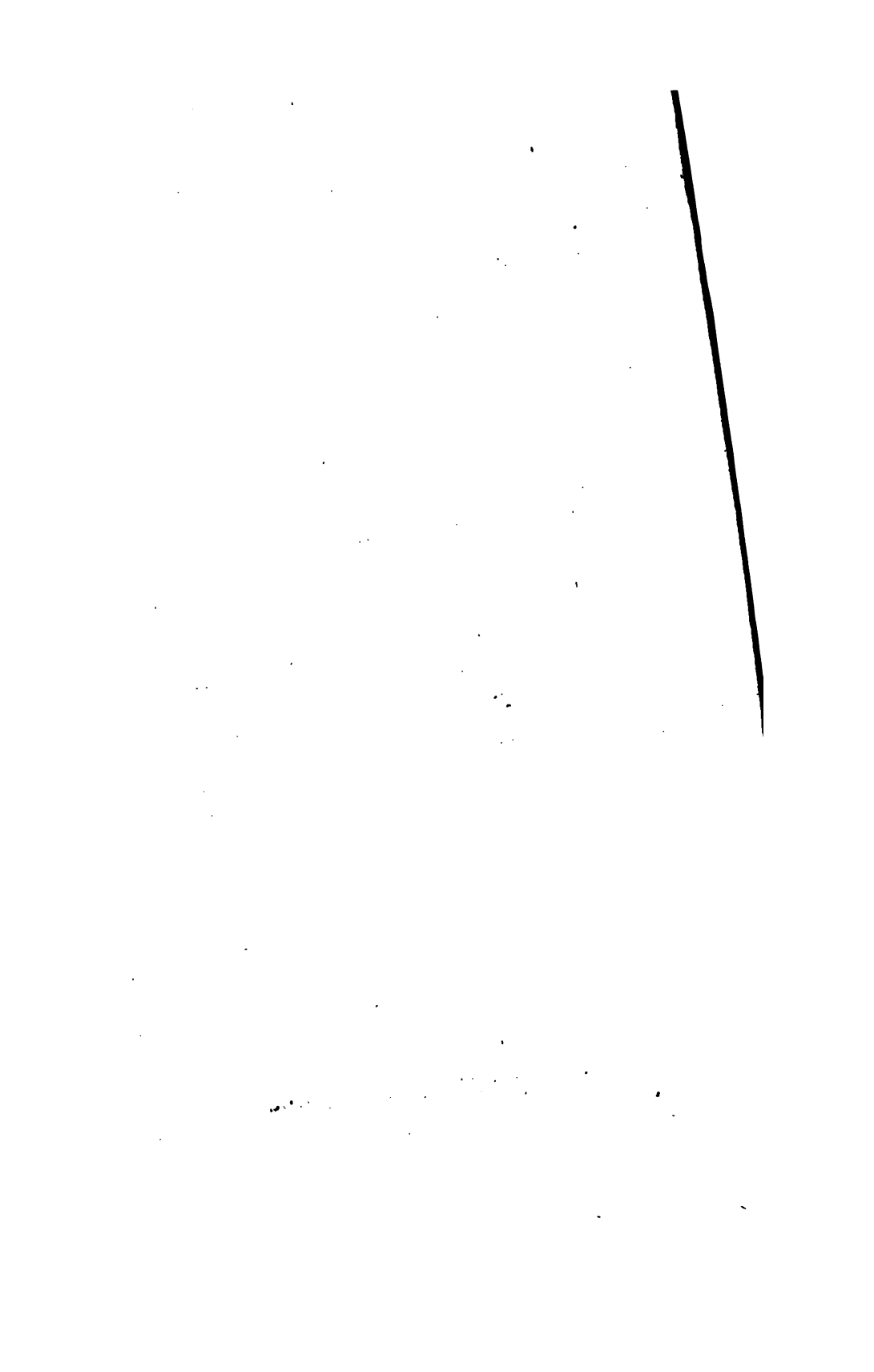
Church of England.

Enquire, I pray thee, of the former age, and prepare thyself to the search of their fathers: For we are but of yesterday, and know nothing.—Job viii. 8, 9.

Ο παλαιος χρηστευεται. Luc. v. 39.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE EDITORS;
And sold by F. C. and J. Rivington, St. Paul's Churchyard;
Hatchard, Piccadilly;
Deighton, Cambridge; and Parker, Oxford.

1810.



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A

DISCOURSE

CONCERNING THE PRETENDED

RELIGIOUS ASSEMBLING

IN PRIVATE

CONVENTICLES,

WHEREIN THE UNLAWFULNESS AND UNREASONABLENESS OF IT IS FULLY EVINCED BY SEVERAL ARGUMENTS.

BY JOHN NORRIS, M. A. AND LATE RECTOR OF ALDBOURN, IN THE COUNTY OF WILTS.

Now, it may seem to admit of a doubt, whether this be, in the present day, "*a seasonable* "*Question;*" inasmuch as, since the passing of the Act commonly called the Toleration Act, and other subsequent Acts in favour of the Dissenters, "*Non-conformist Ministers*" are no longer "*silenced;*" neither do they, by preaching in Conventicles licensed under the provisions of those Statutes, act altogether "*without leave,* "*or against the Will, of the Magistrate.*" They may, indeed, in a certain sense, be said to act, even now, *against the Will* of the Magistrate, by impugning that Doctrine or Discipline which is established under the Magistrate's authority. For it is to be observed, that what is called the Toleration Act does not *repeal the Act of Uniformity;* which still remains in full force; but only takes off those pains and penalties, which had been enacted by other Statutes, subsequent to the Act of Uniformity, in order to enforce its observance. This was clearly shewn, and very forcibly urged, by the Son of this Author, (John Norris, of Bemerton) in a Tract, entitled, "The Charge of Schism continued, being a "Justification of the Author, for charging the "Separatists with Schism, notwithstanding the "Toleration;" (printed, 8vo. Lond. 17..) in which he proves, that the Toleration only *removes the Penalty;* and that it does not give a

liberty

liberty of *Allowance*, but only a liberty of *Impunity*. Nevertheless, since, by the removal of the Penalty, persons who oppose or dissent from the Established Faith and Worship, are no longer amenable, as they were wont to be, to public Justice, nor, consequently, are guilty, *in the same sense, or rather with the same consequences, that they were before*, of disobedience to the Laws of the Realm; the Question above stated, so far as relates to *this* point, may not be regarded as equally relevant to the present state of the case.

This view of the subject, however, forms only a part, and by no means the largest or most important part, of the Work which the Editors were desirous of republishing. The general Question, it will be observed, is, "Whether a "course of Preaching, or other Ministerial Acts, "in Private Meetings, (commonly called Con-"venticles) may be accounted *the Ordinance of* "*God.*" This the Author discusses under *eight* different heads of Argument; the substance of which is as follows:

1. Such Preaching or Meeting is sinful, because done in disobedience or opposition to the known Laws of the Church and Kingdom wherein we live; and which we stand bound, in conscience towards God, to observe and obey.

2. It

2. It is contrary to that Order, which God himself, by His word, hath established in His Church.

3. It hath no promise of God's blessing made or annexed to it.

4. It is not only contrary to good and wholesome Laws, destructive to good Order, and destitute of Divine promise, but also contrary to Gospel commands.

5. It hath no Scripture precedent, or warrantable example, to ground it on.

6. God hath branded it with a black mark, forewarning and commanding his people to avoid it.

7. It is performed without any manner of Commission or Authority.

8. Instead of building up people in Faith and Holiness, it demolisheth Christian Duty, and in the natural tendency of it, produceth sinful and pernicious effects.

Of these several Arguments, it will be immediately perceived, that *only* the *first* treats of it as an offence against *the Civil and Ecclesiastical Laws of the Realm*, and, as such, contrary to the will of God:—whilst the remaining *seven* relate to it as a *spiritual* offence, destructive of the fundamental principles of Church-Unity, prohibited by the Holy Scriptures, and, consequently,

sequently, not to be "accounted the Ordinance "of God, or means to beget and increase Faith, "or any other saving Grace."

Under these several heads, many convincing Arguments are urged to shew the evil tendency, and the absolute unlawfulness of needless separation from the Church. The Editors, therefore, conceived, that, by the omission of the single Argument above-mentioned, they might render the work equally well adapted to the present times, as it was to those in which it was written; and that thus, without weakening the general train of reasoning, they might obviate the only objection to which it seemed liable. They could not indeed but regret, that, in so doing, they must necessarily sacrifice many observations of great weight, and at all times deserving of most serious consideration. Nevertheless, they judged it better to make this sacrifice, than to give the caviller occasion to reproach them with bringing forward unseasonable and irrelevant matter.

The Work, indeed, (although considerably curtailed by this omission) contains such a body of clear and luminous reasoning, urged in a persuasive and affecting manner, that it would be difficult to find any piece, of the same brevity, equally full and satisfactory on the subject: and the Editors doubt not, that both by the Clergy and Laity who are competent to appre-

ciate

ciate its worth, it will be deemed a most valuable republication.

Respecting the *Author* of the Tract, much pains have been taken by the Editors, to obtain, through private channels of inquiry, not generally accessible, such particulars as might be interesting to the curious Reader. But the materials of information they have found to be scanty and defective.

It appears, from his Epitaph in the Church of Aldbourne, near Hungerford, Wilts, that John Norris was born in 1615, and died in 1681, aged 66 years. His Son, John Norris, afterwards Rector of Bemerton, in Wilts, (the well-known Author of various Theological and Miscellaneous Works) was born in the year 1657, at Collingborne Kingston, of which place his Father was then Minister. Collingborne Kingston is a Vicarage in the Deanry of Marlborough and Archdeaconry of Wilts, and the Patronage is in the Dean and Chapter of Winchester. Afterwards, our Author, John Norris, sen. was collated to the Vicarage of Aldbourne, in the same Deanry and Archdeaconry, and in the gift of the Bishop of Salisbury. He was buried at Aldbourne; in which Church a Monument was erected to his memory, with an Epitaph written by his Son.

From these dates and memorials, it is evident that

that our Author held the Benefice of Collingborne Kingston during the Protectorate; of which Benefice it is mentioned in Walker's Sufferings of the Clergy, (part 2. p. 188.) that a Mr. Alexander was dispossessed by the Parliament; which Mr. Alexander "survived the Usurpation, but never claimed his Living again." This might create a suspicion, that Mr. Norris had, for a time, swerved from his attachment to the Church of England, and yielded to the spirit of the times.

But Mr. Norris, it appears, was possessed of a considerable Estate at Collingborne Kingston; and it is probable that he was a native of that place. The Estate descended to his Son and Grandson; after whose decease, without Heirs, it passed into another family. It seems therefore not unreasonable to conjecture, that, upon the removal of the afore-mentioned Mr. Alexander by the Parliament, Mr. Norris, being well-known and respected by the people of Collingborne, might, through their recommendation, be appointed to succeed him; and that Mr. Norris himself, to prevent the introduction of some objectionable person, might be induced to accept the situation. Instances were not unfrequent, in those difficult times, of Clergymen of the Church of England complying so far with the orders of the ruling party, as to forego

the

the public use of the Liturgy; by which compromise, several Incumbents were continued in their Benefices, who, though they laid aside for a season the use of the Form of Prayer, still adhered to the Doctrine of the Church of England. Whether Mr. Norris made any such compromise, or, on any other account, obtained favour with the Parliament, cannot now, perhaps, be ascertained. But the fact, that he was, after the Restoration, promoted to another Benefice, clearly shews, that he was not considered as an unfaithful Minister of the Church of England. Probably, he was collated to the Living of Aldbourne by Seth Ward, Bishop of Salisbury; a man high in favour at Court, in the reigns of both the Charles's, though, according to Anthony Wood, he had also kept up his influence under the Protectorate. To such a Patron, Mr. Norris's merits could hardly be unknown. Moreover, the principles so ably and strenuously maintained in the following Work, and those which are no less conspicuous in his Son's Writings, afford the strongest presumptive evidence, not only of his own inviolable attachment to the Church, but of his care to educate his children in the same way. The improbability that such a man should act inconsistently with those principles, ought to outweigh any unfavourable surmises, grounded only on appear-

appearances not easy to be explained at this distance of time.

The following is a copy of the Epitaph on Mr. Norris, written by his Son, and placed in the Chancel of Aldbourne Church. It was communicated by the late celebrated Antiquarian, Mr. Gough; but it may also be found, correctly given, in the Biographia Britannica.

In Memoriâ eternâ
Erit Justus.
D. Johannes Norris
Fide juxta et Vitâ Theologus
Hujus Ecclesiæ olim Vicarius
16 Die Martii Anno Salutis
Humanæ 168: Ætat. suæ 66
Mortalis esse desiit
Nunc verò per Christū Fideliū Servatorem
Cujus Evangelium indefessus Ille
In Sacris Concionibus e Suggesto
(Juxta quod quicquid ei erat terrestre subtùs inhumatur)
Per 21 et amplius Annos alacri Animo
Et Studio haud mediocri illustravit
Inter Beatos vivit immortalis.
In Justitiâ spectabo Faciem tuam
Et satisfactus ero quando resuscitabo in
Similitudine tuâ. Ps. 17. 15.

London,
July 17, 1810.

THE

THE

PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

THOUGH there be no great need of a *Preface* to the following Papers, yet partly to comply with custome, and partly out of a Reverential respect to the dear memory of the Authour, my deceased Father, I thought it convenient to premise something by way of *Apology* to the Reader.

And that he may not be disappointed in his *after* Entertainment, 'twill be requisite for him in the *entrance* to understand, that he is not here to expect a Discourse recommended πιθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις by stroaks of Oratory, neat turns of expression, and harmonious Cadencies, this being no way πράγμασιν ἀνάλογον (as *Aristotle* says in his Rhetorick) agreeable to the nature of

the thing, which being a *determination* of a *Question*, calls for no other Ornaments than plainness, perspicuity and solidity.

And as such a Rhetorical mode of Writing suits not with the *nature* of the *work*, so neither with the *design* of its *Composition*. For this Treatise was principally intended by the Authour, for the instruction of ordinary and unlearned persons, and particularly those of his own Congregation, and accordingly he made it his business, to bring it to the *level* of their Capacities.

Of what advantage this work may be to the *learned* World, it becomes not me to presage, onely thus much I believe I may say, that the Cause has not suffered under his hands, and that as Peace and Unity was his *aim*, so Truth and Victory is his *attainment*. And this is all the Apology I think needfull to make in behalf of the Authour.

Now, as to what concerns my *Publication* of this *Posthumous* Treatise, I am aware but of one objection that may be made against it, which is, that the World is well stockt with excellent

discourses

discourses on this Subject already. This I acknowledge to be *true*, but no way available to the purpose for which it is alledged. For first, may not the same be said of almost all the Arguments that are? And yet this is not thought sufficient to barr all after-undertakings. And besides, there are different ways of managing the same Subject, and how *stale* soever the latter be, yet the former may be always *new*. According to that of *Seneca*, *Etsi omnia a veteribus inventa essent; hoc tamen semper novum erit, usus & inventorum ab aliis scientia & dispositio.* Besides, there is as much (if not more) in the advantageous proposal of an Argument, as in the Argument it self, and it often happens, that by the mere placing a thing in a *new* light conviction is wrought, when the very same consideration in another posture proved unsuccessfull.

These Considerations, together with the prospect of being beneficial to the publick, prevailed with me to concern my self in this Publication, and are (I hope) sufficient to justifie the undertaking to others. For sure that person would betray a very narrow and selfish spirit, who

who declines an opportunity of doing good with the fruits of *another*'s labour, as his charity to the Poor must needs be very cold, that refuses to be the *Steward of another's Bounty.* Farewell.

JOHN NORRIS.

Allsoul's College,
June the 1st. 1684.

A

DISCOURSE,

&c.

ARGUMENT II.

THAT cannot be the ordinance of God, or means of grace, that is contrary to that order which God himself by his word hath established in his Church. For God is not the Authour of disorder and confusion; but the Devil. In the Church God's Command is for order in all things: *Let all things be done decently and in order* *. And St. *Paul* did as well rejoice to see *the order* as the *faith* of the Church of *Coloss* †. Onely *Death* and *Hell* have no *order* ‡. And it is a kind of death to a godly Christian to see disorder in the Church of Christ, and his Service. For what is a Church without order, but

* 1 Cor. xiv. 33, 40. † Col. ii. 5.
‡ Job x. 21, 22.

a kind of an Hell above ground? Where order is wanting, what is a Kingdom but a *Chaos* of Confusion? Yea,

But such a Ministry, and such Meetings and Assemblies as are in question, are contrary to the order God hath in his word established in his Church. For the order God hath set in his Church is, that his People should be distinguished into flocks, and that every flock should have its own shepherd. *It is God's ordinance, (saith Mr.* Hildersham,) *as it is agreeable to good order, that Christians should be sorted into Congregations, according to their dwellings, that they who dwell next together, should be of the same Congregation, and from thence the name παροικία, a parish, first came**. As it is against all reason and Scripture, that a people scattered about, some here, and some there, in several parts of the Country, should voluntarily associate and combine themselves in a distinct body, under what Ministry they please, and that best suits with their humour, and call themselves a Church, as the manner of some is; So it is agreeable with the very light of nature, and dictates of right reason, that a people in a vicinity and neighbourhood dwelling together, ought to join together with those of that neigh-

* Hild. *on* Joh. iv. p. 242.

bourhood, according as most conveniently they may, for the worship and service of God. We reade of the Church of God at *Rome*, *Corinth*, *Galatia*, *Ephesus*, &c. And of *seven Epistles written from Heaven to seven several Churches, all which had their abode at the places whence the Churches bare their Names, these are Scripture Churches;* saith a Presbyterian *.

It is the ordinance of God that every Flock or Congregation should have their own pastour, *Take heed to the flock over whom the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers* †. *Timothy* appointed *Titus to ordain Elders in every City* ‡, *i. e.* wheresoever there was a body of people for a fit Congregation, there must be a Pastour or Elder placed. Whence it appears that even in the Apostles days there was a distinction of Churches, and Congregations; for the Elders had their flocks over whom the Holy Ghost made them Overseers. The like is said of *Paul* and *Barnabas that they ordained Elders in every Church* §. Hence, (saith *Calvin*), may be gathered the difference betwixt the office of those Elders, and that of the Apostles ‖. These had no certain station in the Church, but still went up and down, hither and thither, to plant new

* Blake *de fæd.* p. 225. † Act. xx. 28.
‡ Tit. i. 5. § Act. xiv. 23. ‖ Calvin *in loc.*

 Churches,

Churches, *Rom.* xv. 19, 20, 23, 24. 1 *Cor.* iv. 17. *Act.* i. 8. *Rom.* i. 14. 2 *Tim.* i. 11. 2 *Cor.* x. 14, 16. But the other were by God's appointment fixed and tyed to their own proper Congregations and Flocks, *Act.* xiv. 23. *Act.* xx. 28. *Tit.* i. 5. 1 *Pet.* v. 1. The diminutive ποίμνιον, used in *Luc.* xii. 32. *Act.* xx. 28. 1 *Pet.* v. 2, 3. Not ποιμνὴ, doth intimate as much *; for, *parvum gregem significat*, it signifies a small part of the great flock distinguished from the rest.

And indeed the state and condition of the Ministers and Ministry of the Church requires, that every Pastour should not take care of all the Flock or Church, but that rather they should have certain portions or Congregations of God's People, committed to them particularly, amongst whom they should bestow their care and pains. For this cause St. *Paul* took course to send certain Ministers to certain particular Churches: as *Crescens* to *Galatia*, *Titus* to *Dalmatia*, and *Tychicus* to *Ephesus* †. *Unde rectissime colligimus* (saith a Learned Casuist ‡) *auditores ordinariis pastoribus contentos esse oportere, ne eos in crimen* ἀλλοτριοεπισκοπῆς *conjiciant.*

So 'tis God's ordinance that Flocks and Congregations should be contented with, and depend

* Jansen. *in concord. evang.*

† 2 Tim. iv. 10, 12.

‡ Baldwin.

on

on their own Pastours. This appears by that charge of the Apostle. *We beseech you brethren to know them* (to own and acknowledge them) *that labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake* *. Again, *remember them that have the rule over you, which have spoken to you the word of God* †. And again, *obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may doe it with joy and not with grief* ‡. In both places the Command of God is for Obedience to Pastours; not any, such as people themselves according to their own humours shall chuse; but it is ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν, in the seventh verse: and τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν, in the seventeenth verse. In both places, *YOUR RULERS*, such as are lawfully set over you by those that are in Authority in the Church. And even as St. *Paul* commends *Epaphroditus* to the *Philippians* as their ordinary Pastour, and commands them to *receive him in the Lord with all gladness, and to hold such in reputation* §. So, he doth the like to other Churches, commanding them to honour and obey their own Pastours; which he would

* 1 Thess. v. 12, 15.
† Heb. xiii. 7.
‡ Heb. xiii. 17.
§ Phil. ii. 29.

never

never have done, if it had been lawfull for people, with neglect of their own Ministers, to follow whom they please.

People are much mistaken, if they think, they are so much at their own disposal, as that they may put themselves under the teaching and care of what Minister they have a mind to, though never so excellent and orthodox. For,

1. First, God is not so careless of the precious Souls of his People in his Church, as to leave them at random to shift for themselves, every one according to his own foolish fancy; but doth dispose of them himself by his good providence, by the hand of those, who from and under him have Authority so to doe, to the care and charge of Pastours of his own appointment, the respective Ministers of those Parishes and places where they, with other of his People, do cohabite. And therefore the form of our institutions to our several charges, runs in these words, *Curam et regimen omnium animarum parochianorum tibi plenarie in Domino committimus.* The definition that our Saviour Christ gives of a Church, is, *a Shepherd and his Sheep that will hear his voice* *. A lawfull Minister, and a Flock or Congregation lawfully committed to his charge make up a true Church. Hereunto ac-

* John x.

cord

cord the Judgment of the Fathers. St. *Chrysostome** in an homily *de recipiendo Severiano*, begins thus; *Sicuti capiti Corpus cohærere necessarium est, ita Ecclesiam Sacerdoti, et Principi Populum.* As it is necessary that the body cleave to the head, so it is likewise of necessity that the Congregation cleave to the Priest, and the People to their Prince. To which the saying of St. *Cyprian*† agrees. *Illi sunt Ecclesia, plebs sacerdoti adunita, et pastori suo grex adhærens.* The Church is a Congregation of believers united to their Minister, and a flock adhering to their Shepherd. For people then to imagine that they are at their own liberty to forsake their own Ministers, and to wander whither they please, is a Principle that tends directly to the destruction of the Church, and is contrary to the very nature and being of it. Should the Flocks of these wanderers doe as their Masters doe, leave and run away from their shepherds, and goe whither they please, and feed where they please, their owners would expect to see but little good come of them.

2. Secondly, a manifest injury will thereby be done to their own Pastours, be they never so vigilant, to be forsaken of their own People, as if they were deficient in the discharge of their

* Chrysost. † Cyprian *Epis.* 69.

duties

duties and offices amongst them. For, if it be lawfull for one to doe so, then 'tis lawfull for ten, and if for ten, then for an hundred, and so consequently for all; and so a Pastour may be forsaken of all his People; which how contrary it is to the order and rules of the Gospel, I leave to any person of sober and staid Principles to judge.

3. Thirdly, It will be matter of offence to others (who are prone to live by example more than by rule *) and an occasion to them to doe the like: and so by this means all that obedience and duty, that by divine Precept, is due to a Minister from his People, would soon perish and come to nothing.

4. Fourthly, An universal liberty of sinning without controll or restraint would by this means be introduced amongst People. For if they may have liberty to wander from one Minister to another, at their pleasure, they will have none at last, to have the cure and care of their souls: neither will any one dare faithfully and freely to rebuke them for any thing they doe amiss, for fear lest they should forsake him also, and still be seeking out to some other. And this is a most cursed condition by the verdict of God

* *Grex totus in agris unius scabie cadit.* Juv.

himself,

himself*, for People to be without a particular Pastour of their own; as *sheep without a shepherd*, wandring now here now there, exposed to Dogs and Wolves, Seducers and Deceivers.

5. Fifthly, It is a sinning against and crossing divine Providence, and carries much of impiety and unchristian Ingratitude in it: God's gracious promise to his People is *I will give you Pastours according to mine own heart, which shall feed you with Knowledge and Understanding* †. Now when God shall be graciously pleased, to make good this promise to a People, and they (therewithall not contented) shall out of a vain Curiosity, light and needless affectation of Novelty, (for as the case in question stands, it can proceed from no other Cause) flock after Strangers and Usurpers, even to a forsaking, either in whole, or in part, their own faithfull Pastour, it is just with God to blast all such Ministry, and to make all their pretended preaching, become but a *reasoning with unprofitable talk, with Speeches wherewith they can doe no good* ‡: And to withdraw his blessing from such unthankfull Peoples attendance on it, so as that *hearing they shall hear and not understand, and seeing they shall see and not perceive* §. And as God threatned the

* Ps. cxix. 176. Jer. v. 6, 7, 17. Zach. x. 11. ib. xi. 10, 15. ib. xiii. 7. Mat. ix. 36.

† Jer. iii. 15. ‡ Job xv. 3. § Mat. xiii. 14.

Jews

Jews in the like case * so may he justly punish such ungratefull Male-Contents, with a certain and efficacious permission of them to be deceived, led into, and hardned in all kind of damnable Errours, by their pretended teachers. And so, what *Gastius* observes of the *Anabaptists*, may be made true of all such humourists, *Quia à veritate avertunt aures, ideo Deus permittit illis doctores, non qui lingua medica sanarent ulcera ipsorum, sed qui pruritum ac scabiem affectuum ipsorum commode scalperent* †. Because they turn away their Ears from the truth, therefore God sends them teachers after their own Lusts, not such as should with wholsome tongues heal their sores, but with their nails scratch the itch of their lusts and affections. They may chance to gain some empty notions, τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, *of science falsely so called* ‡, but nothing of sanctified or saving knowledge.

And if a man look with an impartial Eye, on the practices of these persons, that transplant themselves out of the Garden of God's Church, into the waste of these unlawfull Assemblies, he may soon discern the visible tokens of divine displeasure upon them and their ways. Such

* Ezek. xiv. 7. Ib. ix.

† Gastius *de Exord. Anabapt. p.* 495.

‡ 1 Tim. vi. 20.

barrenness

barrenness of true Holiness and Christian-charity, such wilfull hardning in ways of Schism, pride and prophaneness (I speak within the compass of mine own sad observation and experience, not with any desire to blazon the Crimes of any, but to declare my heart-breaking sorrow for them) as if that curse pronounced by our Blessed Saviour against the fruitless Figtree in the Gospel, were executed on them, *Let no good fruit grow on thee henceforth for ever* *. Their faith seems to be mere faction; all their Religion but a professed disobedience to their Superiors, and a studied opposition to the truth of that which (through the Mercy of God) is established in our Church: their holiness, to be always finding of faults: and *stulto zelo pleni* (as saith *Melancthon*) being filled with foolish zeal, they will like nothing but their own inventions. As soon as ever they fansie themselves to be converted, they can teach their King how to govern, and their Ministers how to preach. They can tell what Laws are fit for the Kingdom, and what Orders for the Church; yea, they are presently so illuminated, that they can see every blemish in both, when in themselves, their companions and families, they cannot see beams and intolerable Evils. Eagle-eyed abroad to spie faults in others,

* Mat. xxi. 19.

and

and look into things that concern them not, but as blind as Beetles at home. Like flies *, they will fasten no where, but on the gall or sore (if there be any) in Church or State.

And whereas Christ in his Gospel hath commanded us, that *each should esteem other better than themselves* †; especially where nothing appears notorious in mens lives to the contrary; these men will be peremptory and *Pope*-like in their definitions, on all that are not of their way and practice, counting and calling them, *Carnal*, the *men of the world*, *the wicked*, &c. and engross to themselves the Names of *Saints*, the *Godly*, God's children and people, with exclusion of all else that are not of their practice and opinions, from having *part* or *lot* in *that business* or privilege. It is holiness enough for any, to be one of them.

The Character which the ancient *Nonconformists* give of the Separatists of their times, doth as exactly fit these of ours, as if it had been made of purpose for them.

"It is evident ‡, (say they,) their zeal hath "been like the rash and indiscreet zeal spoken of "and reproved in the Sons of *Zebedeus*. And

* *Hist. animal. p.* 384. † Phil. ii. 3.

‡ *Grave and modest Confutat. published by Mr.* Rathband, *p.* 61, 62.

"savoureth

" savoureth altogether of Uncharitableness and " not of Love: for as all they that have once de- " clined to that Schism, are found to be exceeding " proud and disdainfull towards all that are con- " trary minded; yea even such as (before they " were infected with that Leaven) were patterns " of all Love, Modesty and Humility unto others; " so will they not acknowledge nor reverence any " of the most excellent graces that God hath " given to any of his Servants amongst us, nor so " much respect them as *Papists* will do. No, they " profess greater detestation and despite to the " most godly and most sincere men amongst us, " than they do to such as are most notorious in " profaneness and malice to the truth." And for shameless lying, spitefull railing, and scurrilous and Ruffian like profaneness which they observe and describe at large in them, I have not found that these come any whit short, but rather (I fear) overpass the deeds of their Predecessours. So that I find that note of St. *Augustine* to be most true, which he observes out of the Parable concerning the man that fell among thieves *. 'Tis said of him that he *went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Jerusalem* was the Church of God, the *holy City* †. There was the Temple, and publick place of the worship of the God of

* Luc. x. 30. † Ps. lxxxvii. 1, 2, 3. cxxviii. 5.

Israel.

Israel. Jericho, a type of the world, unkind to *God's spies* *, as the world is to his Ministers; where God had no publick worship at all. Betwixt it and *Jerusalem*, there was a Desart, infamous for frequent Robberies and Murthers there committed: in which respect it was called *ADOMIM*, for the store of Bloud there shed. There was King *Zedekiah* taken by the Army of the *Chaldeans* †, when he fled from *Jerusalem*. And thither the man bended his course. Whereupon St. *Augustine* notes, *si non descendisset, in latrones non incidisset*, had he not gone down from God and his Church, he had not fallen into the hands of Thieves: so long as he had kept himself in God's way, he would have kept him from all harm and danger: But if he will goe from the Church, let him go whither else he please, God will give him over into the hands of Thieves, who shall *strip him, wound him*, and *leave him half dead*. Our Church-forsakers in these days have sped no better than that man did then, but since they left our *Jerusalem*, the place of God's publick worship, they have fallen into the hands of Thieves, that great and old Cheater, the Devil and his Instruments, the Seducers of our times, who *craftily lye in wait to deceive:* And these have stript them of their

* Josh. ii. † 2 King xxv. 5.

Raiment,

Raiment, all that external appearance of Peace, Charity, Modesty and Humility, that formerly they seemed to be clothed withall, and have not left them so much as one ragg remaining to hide their Nakedness: *wounded* them in their *minds* and *judgments* with errours and falshoods; in their *Consciences* with Superstition and vain devotion; in their *affections* with utter aversness and crossness to all that is orderly and imposed by Authority; insomuch that they are left *half dead;* some life remains in them; to any thing that is evil and forbidden, they are quick and active, but to any thing that is truly good and enjoined, as dead as a stock: *wise to do evil, but to do good they have no knowledge* *. Such is God's Justice and Severity on those that leave *Jerusalem* for *Jericho*.

In a word; if all of this sort of People throughout the Nation be as those with whom I have to doe (and I know there is the same corruption in the Natures of all, though there may not be the same eruption in all), God and Godliness have not greater enemies, nor the Devil greater instruments to advance his Kingdom, in the introduction of *Atheism* and *Prophaneness*, than themselves. God's publick worship and worshippers are matter of their loathing and scorn,

* Jer. iv. 22.

and

and if ever any of them afford their presence to any part of it, it is of purpose either to quarrel at or deride it. And as he whom they serve *goes about like a roaring Lion seeking whom he may devour*, so do they make it their business to beget prejudice in the hearts of all with whom they converse, against their own Ministers and Ministry, and to make Proselytes to themselves and their party, of the worst and easiest sort of People. The pretext of Piety and Conscience is both the *Veil* wherewith they hide their unparallelled Pride, Malice, and Hypocrisie; and their *Bait* wherewith they catch simple Souls in their Net. As at the building of the Temple under *Zerubbabel* *, the adversaries making shew of helping forward the work by setting their hands to it, pretending they sought the same God the Jews did, proved themselves to be the greatest Enemies to God's People, and hinderers of the building by their coloured Friendship; so I know not any whose courses are more to the disturbance of the peace, and prejudice to the enlargement of the Church, and furtherance of Religion, than these men that would be noted for a *Form of Godliness, but indeed deny the Power of it.*

I heartily wish, that in their lives they would

* Ezra iv. 1, 2.

hence-

henceforth stoutly confute this Character I have given of them, which yet comes far short of what by wofull experience I have found in them: And when I see it done, I shall as gladly retract what I have written, as with sorrow of heart I have uttered it. In the mean time I return from what I have digressed.

If a greater excellency of gifts and parts in one Minister above another, be pretended as a cause of their wandring, they forget what St. *Paul* wrote to the *Corinthians*, when there grew Schisms and Divisions amongst them, upon the account of the diversity of gifts which they observed in their Teachers. *I am of Paul* * (saith one), his matter is powerfull, his Doctrine sound, his Method plain. *I am of Apollos* (saith another), he is an Eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures; him I prefer. *I am of Cephas* (saith a third), his preaching I most affect. *I am of Christ* (saith a fourth), I care for none of all the former, they are but men; I will therefore have my dependance wholly on Christ, with neglect of the instrument. But what saith St. *Paul* to all this? *Is Christ divided* †? Can he be the head of such divers and disagreeing bodies, being himself but one? Is he divided from his Ministers, so as not to work by his Spirit, in

* 1 Cor. i. 12. † Ver. 13.

the hearts of his people, with his word preached by one as well as by another? Can ye allow of one self same Gospel, as Christ's, being uttered by one Man, and loath it being uttered by another? Will ye acknowledge Christ to be the chief Shepherd and Bishop of your Souls, the great Doctour and Prophet of his Church, and yet think that he will not make his word successfull, for the salvation of those whom he hath ordained to Eternal life, by what Ministry soever he shall appoint? *For who is* Paul *, *and who is* Apollos? *But Ministers by whom ye believe, even as the Lord gave to every man.* They are but the Ministers of Christ, and such as doe nothing of themselves; but God so worketh by them as it pleaseth him. *I will not dare* † (saith one of them), *to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word or deed.*

The Ministry is God's ordinance, and depends not upon the worthiness of him that is employed in it; but it hath its virtue, force, and efficacy, from the blessing of God and inward operation of his Spirit, which worketh where, and in, and by, whom he will. Christ himself converted very few, in comparison of the many converted by his Apostles. Those Ministers whose parts are

* 1 Cor. iii. 5. † Rom. xv. 18.

most

most Seraphical, cannot at their pleasure infuse grace into their hearers hearts. *A Paul may plant, and an Apollos may water*, but it is *God* that must *give the increase* *. So as that neither the one nor the other, are any thing in themselves, without God's blessing, which the weakness of the instrument shall not hinder, as making most for the Honour of the Supreme Agent to work by it. *We have this treasure in Earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of Men* †. All God's Servants are not alike gifted; some have *five talents*, some *ten*, some but *one;* yet all may be his faithfull Servants, and may have their gifts given them to profit withall. And from any of their gifts, any may learn and profit, if the fault be not their own. Who thrives more in grace than they, who conscionably attend and depend on their own godly Pastours? Who go more empty away with the shell of Religion onely, when others have gotten the kernel, but such as love to wander and *heap up to themselves Teachers* of their own chusing? The first sort find the preaching of God's word to prove wholsome food to them; which though it seem course, and to be served in with great simplicity (like *Daniel*'s diet ‡,

* 1 Cor. iii. 6. † 2 Cor. iv. 7.

‡ Dan. i. 15.

which was but *Pulse* and *Water)*, yet because it is God's allowance, always hath his blessing with it, and makes his Children so to thrive, *that their Countenances do appear fairer, and they are fatter in flesh*, than the other, who, though they feed upon Varieties, and (perhaps) more curiously cook'd dishes, yet have Souls that are still thin and lean, and depart from their banquets without any great satisfaction, for want of that blessing, without which all manner of Varieties prove but wind and vanity. For *Man lives not by bread onely, but by the word of blessing that comes forth of God's mouth**. Neither say I this of mine own private opinion, but the brethren of the *Non-conformity* say the same. *He that keepeth in God's order, under a meaner honest Minister, is like to be a more humble thriving Christian, than he, that breaks that order under pretence of Edification.* Saith Mr. Baxter†.

The ancient and godly Fathers of the Church, taking into consideration this order, that God hath established amongst his People, have both in their publick Councils, and private writings, always disallowed and forbidden the liberty that People are apt to take of their own heads to wander from their own Pastours, to hear Strangers. In the third Council of *Carthage* (where *Saint*

* Matt. iv. 4.

† *Christian Concord. p.* 36.

Augustine

Augustine himself was present) there was this decree made. *Placuit ut a nullo Episcopo usurpentur plebes alienæ, nec aliquis Episcoporum supergrediatur in Diœcesi suum Collegam* *. Be it ordained that no Bishop usurp, or have any thing to doe with another's People, or enter into the Diocese of his Compartner in office, to meddle or make there. And this Cano n extends its obligation to Ministers of inferiour order, in reference to each other's Congregations, as well as to Bishops in relation to their Dioceses. For *Sicut Episcopus se habet ad Diœcesim suam, sic sacerdos ad suam parochiam* †, saith *Aquinas.* As it is with a Bishop, with respect to his Diocese, so 'tis with a Minister in respect of his Parish. *Sine spe sunt* (saith that holy Martyr St. *Cyprian* ‡), *et perditionem maximam de indignatione Dei acquirunt, qui schisma faciunt, et relicto Episcopo, alium sibi foris Pseudoepiscopum constituunt.* They are without hope, and procure to themselves the greatest destruction through the just indignation of God, who make schisms in the Church, and leaving their own Bishop, appoint and set up another, a false Bishop, to themselves. Again, *singulis pastoribus portio gregis est ascripta, quam regat quisque ac guber-*

* *Concil.* 3. *Carthag.* l. 10. † Aquin. *supple.* 3. *par.* 9. 8. A. 4. ‡ Cyprian. *L.* 1. *Epist.* 6.

net,

*net, rationem sui actus domino reddat**. To every Pastour there is a portion of God's People committed, which he ought to Rule and Govern, as one that must give an account to God for them. And saith the same holy man farther, *Oportet eos quibus præsumus, non circumcursare, nec Episcoporum concordiam cohærentem sua subdola et fallaci temeritate collidere.* It behoves those over whom God hath set us, not to run about hither and thither, nor by their false and crafty temerity, to break the Concord and good Agreement that ought to be amongst Ministers.

In the Canon-law it is ordained, *Ut dominicis et festis diebus presbyteri, antequam Sacra celebrent, plebem interrogent, si alterius parochianus sit in ecclesia, qui proprio contempto presbytero, ibi velit Sacris interesse; si inveniatur, statim ab ecclesia abjiciant†*. That on Festival and Lord's days, the Ministers, before they begin Divine Service, shall ask the people, if there be any Person of another Parish in the Church, who neglecting his own Pastour, desires to be present at divine Worship there; and if any such be found, they shall forthwith thrust him out of the Church. And in another place it is thus decreed: *Omnis et quilibet confiteatur*

* Cyprian. *L.* 1. *Epist.* 3.

† *In jure Canon. L.* 3. *decret.* Greg. *Tit.* 29. *de parœciis.*

proprio

*proprio Sacerdoti: siquis autem alieno Sacerdoti voluerit justa de causa confiteri peccata, licentiam prius postulet et obtineat a proprio Sacerdote, cum aliter ipse illum non possit absolvere vel ligare**. Let every man confess his faults to his own Minister: but if any upon *just cause* desire to confess to another Minister, let him first ask and obtain Licence so to doe, from his own Minister, seeing otherwise no other can absolve or bind him.

Of the same judgment in this case, have the reverend Brethren of the *Presbyterian* perswasion declared themselves to be; not onely in their Sermons to their people (which I have sometimes heard), but I have seen an *Act*, and can produce it, of the assembly of *Scotland*, Entitled, An act against such as withdraw themselves from the publick worship in their own Congregation. Wherein the said Assembly, in the zeal of God "For preserving *order*, *unity* and *peace* in the "*Kirk*, *for maintaining that respect which is due* "*to the ordinances and Ministers of Jesus Christ*, "*for preventing Schisms, noysome errours, and all* "*unlawfull practices, which may follow on the* "*peoples withdrawing themselves from their own* "*Congregations*, do ordain every member in "every Congregation to keep their own *Paroch* "*Kirk*, to *communicate there in* the *Word* and

* *L. 5. Tit. 38. de pœnitentiis et remissis.*

"*Sacra-*

" *Sacraments:* and if any Person or Persons " shall hereafter *absent themselves from their own* " *Congregations,* except in urgent Cases, *made* " *known to and approved by the Presbytery,* the " Ministers of these Congregations whereto they " resort, shall both in publick by Preaching, and " in private by admonition, shew *their dislike of* " *their withdrawing from their own Minister,* " that in so doing they may witness to all that " hear them their due care to *strengthen the* " *hands of their fellow Labourers in the work of* " *the Lord, and their detestation of any thing* " *that may tend to Separation, or any of the above-* " *mentioned Evils:* hereby their own flock will " be *confirmed in their stedfastness, and the un-* " *stable Spirits of others will be rectified.* Like " as the Minister of that Congregation from " which they do withdraw shall labour first by " private admonition to reclaim them; and if " any after private admonition given by their " own Pastour do not amend, in that case the " Pastour shall delate the aforesaid Persons to " the Session, who shall *cite and censure them as* " *Contemners of the comely order of the Kirk.* " And if the matter be not taken order with " there, it is to be brought to the Presbytery. " For better observing whereof, the Presbyteries " at the several visitations of their Kirks, and " provincial Assemblies, in their censure of the " several Presbyteries shall enquire hereanent.

" Which

"Which enquiry and report shall be registrate "in the provincial Books, that their deligence "may be seen in the General Assembly."

The contrary course here amongst us of this age, hath been taken notice of by godly Christians beyond the Seas, as our great fault, and contrary to the practice and custome of the reformed Churches of God abroad. *Honorius Reggius*, a learned man, hath taken the pains to gather together out of Mr. *Edwards* his *Gangrene*, and other Authours, no less than 180 errours practised in *England*, since the year of our Lord 1640. And hath divulged them to the whole World, to the great shame of our nation, and scandal to our Religion; whereof this is the 125*th* errour*: *Partem Libertatis Christianæ esse, non audire proprium Ministrum; sed ubi libeat, et a quo plus Commodi speretur.* That it is a part of Christian liberty, for people not to hear their own Ministers, but to attend that Ministry which they like best, and from whom they hope to receive the most profit.

I never heard or read that this disorderly practice was tolerated or allowed in the Church of God in any part of Christendom, but once, and that was by virtue of a Licence and privilege granted by certain *Popes* to the *Mendicant*

* Honor. Reg. *de statu Eccles. in Anglia. p. 95.*

Fryers

Fryers to intermeddle in matters of Parish Churches *, as to hear Confessions, to preach and teach, with power thereunto annexed to *gather the benevolence of the people for their labour.* Which occasioned such a contention in *France* between the *Prelates* and the *Fryers* there, *An. Dom.* 1354, that the Prelates of *France* convening and Assembling together in the City of *Paris*, caused by the *Bedles* to be called together all the Students, Masters, and Bachelours of every Faculty, with the chief Heads of all the Religious houses, and *Fryers* in the University of *Paris*; who being all congregated together in the Bishop of *Paris* his house, where there were present four Archbishops, twenty Bishops; and all the rest of the Bishops throughout the whole Kingdom of *France*, except those who were necessarily absent, with full consent did send in under their hand-writing, a complaint against the insolency and Presumption of the *Fryers.* The Bishop of *Byters* †, preaching in that Assembly on that Text of St. *Paul, Eph.* iii. 18. *ut sciatis quæ sit longitudo, latitudo, altitudo et profunditas charitatis*, took occasion to show, "That by the vigour of true charity every "man ought to hold himself content with that

* *Ex scriptis* Godfri. de fontantis.

† *Episcopus Byturisensis.*

"which

" which was his own, and not to intermeddle or
" busie himself farther than to him appertained
" or belonged to his Office. For there (saith he)
" all order Ecclesiastical is dissolved, whereas
" men not containing themselves in their own
" precincts, presume in other men's charges where
" they have nothing to doe. But this Charity
" (saith he) now-adays waxeth cold, and all Ec-
" clesiastical order is confounded, and utterly
" out of order. For many there be now-adays,
" which presume to thrust in themselves where
" they have nothing to doe, so that now the
" Church may seem a Monster. For as in a
" natural body appeareth a Monster, when one
" Member doeth the office of another; so in
" the spiritual body, which is the Church, it
" may be thought like-wise."

Against the same evil and ungodly practice of the *Fryers* in our Land and Nation, at the same time, did that famous, godly and learned, *Richard Armachanus*, Archbishop and Primate of Ireland, inveigh in seven or eight Sermons, preach'd on purpose in *London:* For which being cited by the *Fryers* before *Pope Innocent* the Sixth, to appear: So he did; and before the face of the *Pope* valiantly defended both in word and writing, that it was better for the parishioners to leave the *Fryers*, and to resort to their own *Pastours*, for that the ordinary *Pastour* is properly appointed of God unto that Ministry which he

exerciseth amongst them, whereas the *Fryers* were but onely permitted of man thereunto: and therein he stood constant unto the Death. For these are the words of *John Wickliff* (as they are quoted by Mr. *Fox**) *Ab Anglorum Episcopis conductus Armachanus novem in Avione conclusiones coram Innocentio 6, et suorum Cardinalium cœtu, contra fratrum mendicitatem audacter publicavit, verboque ac scriptis ad mortem usque defendit.*

Now if this be the order which God hath established in his Church, That People should be divided into flocks, that every flock should have their own Pastour, and that they should depend upon him; then he can by no means endure to see a breach of that order in his service, that he hath set. How much it hath displeased him, appears in that famous instance in 1 *Chron.* xv. 13. *Because they sought him not according to the right order, therefore God made a breach upon them.* And what that breach was both of *order* on the People's part, and of *punishment* on God's part, may be seen, *Cap.* xiii. 9, 10. *Uzzah*, out of a very good intention put forth his hand to stay the *Ark* when it was in danger of falling, and therefore was smitten with sudden death; according to the just threat-

* *Act. mon.* T. i. *p.* 533.

ning

ning of God, pronounced before. *They shall not touch any holy thing lest they dye**. God will be worshipped and served, not onely in his own ordinances, but in his own order also. There are many duties, *quæ cum bona sint opera, perniciem pariunt, cum non eo ordine quo sunt constituta peragantur* †; which though they be good works, yet the doers of them may be damned, because they doe them not in that order they should. Upon this account *Mart. Luther* sharply reprehended those of *Wittenberge*, who in his absence had abrogated the private Mass and Idols; had celebrated the Lord's Supper under both kinds; had taken away auricular Confession, superstitious differences of meats, invocation of Saints, and many other Popish fopperies, and intolerable abuses in the Church; *non quod impie fecissent, sed quod non ordine* ‡. Not but that the work was good in itself, but it was ill done, because not done in a right order; and therefore it was justly culpable and blameable in them. Circumstances of actions often marr the substance. In divine Worship our care must not onely be to the matter of the service, that it be good, but to the circumstances also wherewith it is attended, that they be warrant-

* Numb. iv. 15. † Arnob. *Cont.* Serapion.

‡ Melchior Adam: *in vit.* Luth. *p.* 123.

able

able by God's word, or at least, not contrary thereunto. God requires that even the *wood* *, and every part of the *sacrifice* offered to him, be *in order* †. And doth God look for *order* among *sticks?* And doth he not much more require order to be kept in the use of those means, by which he hath appointed to bring Souls to Heaven?

What gross absurdities would unavoidably follow, from such a manifest breach of order in the Church? If one Minister may intrude into another's Parish and Congregation, and there set up a course of private house-preaching, and other ministerial Acts; why then may not the *Bishop* of one Diocess thrust himself into the Diocess of another, and there take upon him to ordain Presbyters, and exercise Episcopal jurisdiction, whether the Diocesan will or no? Which as it is contrary to all good Laws and Order, so hath been always forbidden and condemned by the Judgment of the Fathers of the Church assembled in Council. Not onely in that of *Carthage*, before mentioned; but also in a Council at *Antioch* it was decreed *non licere uni Episcopo in Diœcesi alterius Episcopale officium exercere* ‡. And in the 36*th* Canon of those which goe under

* Lev. i. 7, 8. † Gen. xxii. 9.

‡ *Concil:* Antioch. *Can.* 13. *et* 22.

the

the Name of the Apostles, it was ordained; *Episcopum non audere extra terminos proprios ordinationes facere, in civitatibus et villis quæ illi nullo jure subjectæ sunt. Si vero convictus fuerit,* &c. That no Bishop shall dare to confer orders out of his own Diocess, in any City or Village, which by no Law or Right is in subjection to him; and if he shall be convicted so to doe, without the consent or leave of those to whom those Cities or Towns do belong, he shall be deposed, and those that are ordained by him.

So likewise in *Civil affairs*, why then may not a Judge who is Commissionated for the *Northern* Circuit, thrust himself into the place and office of him that is appointed for the *Western*, sit on the bench, judge causes, and condemn Malefactours *in alieno foro?* Which were the way to overthrow all Justice; according to that known Axiome in the Law, *Sententia a Judice non SUO lata, nulla est ipso jure.* And, in *Military* matters, why then may not the *Colonel* of one *Regiment* (or a *Reformado* Officer that hath lost his Company and hath none left to command) intrude himself into another Regiment, and there take upon him to muster the Souldiers, and lead a party? Which is the onely way to open a Floodgate to all Confusion and disorder that is imaginable, to the Destruction of Magistracy, Ministry, Judges, Armies, and all things.

Now

Now *order* being a great part of God's Law, he that wilfully breaks good order, makes himself guilty of the breach of the whole Law; and so makes void his Plea for an ordinance of God which may be instrumental to beget faith or grace in the Souls of those that attend unto it.

The Queen of *Sheba* when she had seen the good order of the Servants that ministred to King *Solomon*, was so astonished with admiration, that *there was no spirit left in her* *. If order in a Family doth so draw the Eyes and Minds of the Beholders to it, how much more amiable is order in the Church, which is *the house of the Living God* †, where a greater than *Solomon* is always present, and where the Glory of the Lord appears in the way and means of the Salvation of Souls?

* 1 King. x. 4, 5. † 1 Tim. iii. 15.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT III.

THAT cannot be the ordinance of God, as a means of grace, that hath no promise of God's blessing made or annexed to it. For though it be a *Paul* that *plants*, and an *Apollos* that *waters* *, yet it must be God that *gives the blessing*, or else all their labour will be to no purpose.

I deny not but that there may be a very good use made of the meetings of Christians together, otherwise than in the publick Congregation, when they are Lawfully and orderly regulated, without manifest breach of any Divine or humane precept, without intrenchment upon, or infringment of any Gospel-order or ordinance, and that they may so expect God's blessing on them.

Yet because *Satan* hath stretched his hellish subtilty to the highest, in these last times (with too unhappy Success) to put easie and well-meaning people out of the sure and ordinary way of God's blessing, by disparaging the publick Church Assemblies, and advancing private, irregular,

* 1 Cor. iii. 6, Psal. cxxvii. 1, 2.

and disorderly meeting (where there is not that ground of expectation of Divine concurrence) into competition with yea prelation above them: therefore (making a little more than ordinary stay here) I shall endeavour to let the Reader see how the Spirit of God in Scripture hath commended the publick Assemblies to us, by affixing more special promises of his presence with, and benediction of them, than on any other, though ordered in all things never so rightly; and how it hath recorded the faith of good men in their belief of these promises, testified in their esteeming, useing, and frequenting the publick ordinances of God accordingly. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, oh thou city of God* *.

To the ancient people of God, the *Jews*, the special promises of Divine presence were made in their *Church Assemblies*. *In the places where I record my name, I will come unto thee and will bless thee* †. *In the Tabernacle (saith God) I will meet thee and Commune with thee of all things* ‡. Which promises were always performed accordingly as may be seen in *Lev.* ix. 23, 24. *Numb.* i. 1. *Numb.* vii. 89. Thence it was that the *Tabernacle* of the Jewish Church, had the

* Ps. lxxxvii. 3. † Exod. xx. 24.

‡ Exod. xxv. 22. Ib. xxix. 42.

name

name of the Tabernacle of meeting, or the *Tabernacle of the Congregation**. To those that attended God there, his blessing was assured. *Blessed is the man whom thou chusest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Court, he shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house even of thy Holy Temple*†. *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house, they shall ever be praising thee*‡. *He blesseth thy Children within thee, O Sion*§. *Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching dayly at my Gates, waiting at the posts of my doors*‖; saith Christ the Wisedom of the Father. And that was the reason of *David's* so great love to the Church. *Lord, I have loved the habitation of thine house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth*¶. And of his desire *to remain in God's house all the days of his Life, that he might behold the beauty of the Lord***. And *we have waited* (for so the word may be read) *for the loving kindness of the Lord in the midst of thy Temple**†.

These promises of God's special and extraordinary blessings, on the *Church Assemblies* of his People in former ages, were so generally known and believed of holy men in those times,

* Exod. xxx. 6, xl. 44. † Ps. lxv. 4. ‡ Ps. lxxxiv. 4. § Ps. cxlvii. 13. ‖ Prov. viii. 34. ¶ Ps. xxvi. 8. ** Ps. xxvii. 4. *† Ps. xlviii. 9. דמה *Cum silentio expectare.*

that when any of them prayed for any spiritual grace or mercy in behalf of any other, they usually expressed it in this form. *The Lord bless thee out of Sion* *. *For there the Lord commanded the blessing even life for evermore* †. So again. *We bless you out of the house of the Lord* ‡. They seem to be the words of the Priests, whose office it was, at the dismissing of the Congregation of God's People, to *bless them in his house* §. They being appointed of God there to bless in his name ‖. Whose benedictions there pronounced, did not prove an empty sound of words in the air, but from the Temple at *Jerusalem*, where they were spoken, they mounted up to *Heaven* where they were heard and answered. *For the Priests and Levites arose and blessed the People, and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy dwelling place, even unto heaven* ¶. In which respect the publick worship of God, is called *his face and presence* **. *Cain*, for the Murther of his Brother, being debarred the benefit of God's publick worship, complains I *shall be hid from thy face* *†, *i. e.* from the face and presence of God and his Church: as appears afterward. *And Cain went out from the presence*

* Psal. cxxxiv. 3. † Ib. cxxxiii. 3. ‡ Ib. cxviii. 26.
§ Num. vi. 24. ‖ Deut. x. 8. ¶ Chr. xxx. 27.
** Psal. cv. 4. Ib. xlii. 2. *† Gen. iv. 14.

of

of God, and dwelt in the Land of Nod : i. e.* from the place of God's publick worship, which in all likelyhood, was celebrated by *Adam* the Father, who being a Prophet †, had taught his Children how to sacrifice, and to serve the Lord.

Thither God's People resorted in multitudes: and *David* professeth that nothing in all his Life hapned to him more pleasant, than to see such flocking to God's house; and that he could goe thither with them: as nothing aggravated his misery more in his persecution by *Saul*, or by his Son *Absolom*'s rebellion (for 'tis uncertain whether of the two was the occasion of *Psal.* xlii.) than that he could not have the happiness that formerly he enjoyed of being one of the first and forwardest in going thither. When I *remember these things* (saith he) I *pour out my Soul in me* ‡. And why? because there he enjoyed God in a more special manner than he could elsewhere: thither he came, and *appeared before the face of God* §. What longings he shewed for God's publick worship at another time, when by *Saul*'s persecution he was forced from the Temple at *Jerusalem*, into the Wilderness of *Judah*, and wandered in the desart, may be seen in *Psal.* lxiii. Though it was grievous to him to fall from that dignity and favour he formerly had, and wherein he flourished in *Saul*'s court: though

* Gen. iv. 16. † Ainsworth *in Loc.*
‡ Psal. xlii. 4. § Ib. ver. 2.

it

it was hard for him to lose all his goods, to be alienated from all his friends, to be forced to converse among strangers and infidels, and to expose his life to all sorts of hardships and hazards, yet all these he counted small and light matters, in comparison of this one great evil, that he was forced to be absent from *Church*, and to abide there, where there was no publick Ministry or worship of God. And therefore making no mention at all of any of those other evils, he makes this his onely request, that he might be restored again, *ut sacris publicis, & Cœtui piorum interesse possit* *, that he might have the liberty of God's house again. Though he might, and doubtless did, converse with God in the *Desart*, pouring out his Prayers to him, which was the onely support he had in his exile; And though no doubt those godly friends he had left about him (for he had such in whose society he might take great comfort in his banishment, he had both a *Prophet* †, and a *Priest* ‡) did join with him in the private service of God, yet this contented him not, he longs still for the publick worship, bewails greatly the want of it, his speeches § are all of the heavenly benefit of it, and the happiness of such as had free access to it. He knew he could no where

* Mollerg. *in loc.*
† 1 Sam. xxii. 5.
‡ 1 Sam. xxiii. 9.
§ Ps. lxxxiv. 1—5.

perform

perform divine worship, with so free and glad an heart, with so much comfort and assurance of so large a blessing, as in that place, where the Ministry was publick, and where the Multitude of God's people did serve and worship him. There he vows his service, *I will give thee thanks in the great Congregation, I will praise thee among much people* *. *I will praise thee with my whole heart in the assembly of the upright, and in the Congregation* †. And calls upon others to doe the like. *Give the Lord the glory due to his Name, worship him in the beauty of holiness* ‡. It was no small blessing promised to good King *Hezekiah*, that his recovery from his sickness should be so soon effected, that he should not be detained from going to *Church*, but the *third day* he should be able *to go up to the house of the Lord* §. The hearing whereof was equal comfort to him, with the news of the enlargement of the lease of his life. It hath even been a sad affliction to the Souls of God's people, to see the *Church-assemblies* neglected, and the Congregations more empty than they were wont to be, and to be debarred the liberty of frequenting them, as being thereby deprived of the most lively representation of Heaven on Earth, to the

* Ps. xxxv. 18, † Ib. cxi. 1.
‡ Ps. xxix. 1, 2. § 2 King xx. 5.

obscuring

obscuring much of God's Glory, which is seen and spoken of in the Sanctuary, and the seducing them from the mutual and comfortable fellowship one of another in his ordinances, and from much refreshing and help they had by these means. *I will gather them which are sorrowfull for the solemn Assemblies, who are of thee, to whom the reproach of it is a burthen* *. 'Tis the Character the Holy Ghost makes of a true Child and Member of the Church, to be thus affected. When ever God's people did shew a more than ordinary desire to prevail in prayer, they have shewed more than ordinary care that the Assemblies might be as publick, and as full, as could be, as 'tis noted by a worthy Divine † of ours. *Blow the Trumpet in* Sion, *sanctifie a Fast, call a solemn Assembly, gather the People, assemble the Children* ‡, &c. In the Fast which King *Jehosaphat* proclaimed, it is said. *All* Judah *stood before the Lord, with their Little ones, their Wives and their Children* §. And it was in the publick place of God's worship, *the house of the Lord* ‖ that they met. The People of *Israel* went up to the *House of the Lord* to ask counsel concerning their War with *Benjamin*. And this they did more than once, and till they did so,

* Zeph. iii. 18. † Mr. Hild. *on* Jo. iv. *p.* 118.
‡ Joel ii. 15. § 2 Chron. xx. 13. ‖ Ib. ver. 5.

they

they prevailed not. The like course took King *Hezekiah* at his keeping the Passover to make the Congregation in the *house of the Lord* (the Temple at *Jerusalem)* as great as he could. *Hezekiah sent to all Israel and Judah, and wrote Letters also to Ephraim and Manasseh that they should come to the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, and keep the Passover unto the Lord God of Israel**. And as there they have prevailed with God in Prayer, more than they could any where else; so there God hath taught them more than they could learn any where else. *When I sought to know this*† (viz. the Doctrine of God's providence and wisedom in the just and righteous management of the affairs of the world) *it was too painfull for me* (saith *David) till I went into the Sanctuary of God, then understood I their end.* When all means else did fail, the publick Ministry, (through God's blessing on it) became effectual to bring him to understanding in this Mystery. Therefore he concludes, *thy way, O God, is in the Sanctuary*‡.

And as in Gospel-times we have the like promises of God's special presence in the publick Congregations of his People *(Mat.* xxviii. 20. *2 Cor.* vi. 16. *Rev.* i. 13.) so it was professed long before, that there the Godly should exhort

* 2 Chron. xxx. 1. † Ps. lxxiii. 16. ‡ Ib. lxxvii. 13.

and

and stir up one another, to seek the true Knowledge of God and his ways, *Es.* ii. 3. *Mic.* iv. 2. which was fulfilled accordingly, both in the Disciples of Christ after his Ascension, *who continually were in the Temple* *; And also in the converted Jews and Gentiles, who *continued daily in the Temple with one accord* †. So did the Christians in the primitive times, in their Churches their Ministers did preach as frequently as the persecution of those times would permit ‡. And there the People assembled themselves together to hear. They did not divide themselves, some of the Congregation going one way, and some another, but *they came together in one place* §. And that place was the *Church.* If not the publick place of worship ‖, so called, (as most think,) yet the place where (by reason of the hot persecution of those times) the whole Church did, or could meet together. And St. *Hierome* gives this commendation of the Faith of the primitive Christians at *Rome. Ubi alibi tanto studio & frequentia ad Ecclesias concurritur? ubi sic ad similitudinem Cœlestis tonitrui Amen reboat; & vacua Idolorum templa quatiuntur? non quod aliam habeant Romani fidem; nisi*

* Luc. xxiv. 53. † Act. ii. 46. ib. v. 42. ib. xix. 8.
‡ Act. xix. 8. ib. v. 21, 25. § 1 Cor. xi. 20.
‖ 1 Cor. xi. 18. ib. xiv. 30. Jam. ii. 2.

hanc

*hanc quam omnes Christi Ecclesiæ; sed quod devotio in iis major sit, & simplicitas ad credendum**. In what part of the World else is there such studious flocking and resort to Christian Churches, as here? Where else doth the *Amen* of the Congregation, sound so loud, as that it seems to equalize a Clap of Thunder in the Air, insomuch that the Idol-temples being left empty, are made to tremble therewith? Not that the *Romans* had any other Faith, than the other Churches of Christ, but they had more devotion and singleness of heart in believing. To this also agrees the Testimony of St. *Augustine, primi credentes in templo veteri Domino servierint*†: the first and new Christians did serve God in the old Temple.

It will be said by some; to what purpose is all this that hath been alledged out of the old Testament, touching God's promises to, or benediction of the *Church-assemblies* of the *Jews*? Their *Tabernacle* and *Temple* were holy places, and the sanctification of them was *Levitical*, and therefore now abolished, and not to be applied to our *Churches*.

This passeth with some for an objection that

* Hierom. *ut citatur a Centur. Magdeburg. cent.* iv. *c.* vi. *p.* 272.

† Aug. *L.* iii. *de. Doct. Christi.*

hath

hath force enough in the bowels of it to overthrow and demolish the whole fabrick of this my third Argument.

But if we carefully look into the inside of it, and not tamely deliver up our hold, we shall find no such formidable matter in it. For, as for the City of *Jerusalem*, the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, they were, in themselves, places no more holy or religious than any other places in the Land of *Canaan* were, or than any other places now in *England* are: But they were therefore holy, *Partly* because they had many things in them and their worship, that were *typical* and *ceremonial*, which are now abolished. The *Temple* and *Tabernacle* were types of the body and humane Nature of Christ. *Joh.* ii. 19, 21. *Heb.* viii. 2. *Heb.* ix. 11. And this (I grant) might be one reason that moved *David* in his banishment, so earnestly to desire his return to the Temple. *Ps.* xlii. 3. And in the beginning of the New Testament, we reade of certain holy and devout persons, that when they prayed, *they went up to the Temple to perform their devotion* *. And those that could not repair to *Jerusalem*, they might and did pray elsewhere, but it was *with their faces towards the Temple* †. And *Partly*, because God placed a memorial *of his*

* Luc. ii. 37. Ib. xviii. 10. † Dan. vi. 10.

Name

*Name there**: or caused his Name to be remembered there, *i. e.* did set apart those places for his publick worship and service, as monuments of him. For as *Absolom* erected a Pillar to keep his Name in remembrance†, so did God chuse out those places to put his Name there. And therefore they were called *his habitation*‡. In this respect our *Churches* now are every whit as holy as *Jerusalem*, the *Tabernacle*, or *Temple* there was, being places lawfully set apart for God's publick worship, to have his *Name* remembred and *placed there*. And so the *Tabernacle* and *Temple* had this in them and their worship, that was moral, and consequently of equal concernment to us now, as to the Jews then, that publick places ought to be assigned for God's publick worship, every way fitting and convenient for Ecclesiastical conventions, where all the Congregation ought to meet, as in a place where God will vouchsafe to be more graciously present in his worship, than elsewhere, according to all those his gracious promises.

And touching the holiness of the *Tabernacle* and *Temple*, that is excepted against in the objection, as being not to the present purpose: Let the answer of that learned and pious Gent. Sir *Henry Spelman* in his book *de non temerandis*

* Exod. xx. 24. † 2 Sam. xviii. 18. ‡ Deut. xii. 5.

Ecclesiis,

Ecclesiis *, be heard and well considered, and the reader will easily find what hath been alledged out of the Old Testament maketh much for my present purpose: his words are these,

"The *Temple* was sanctified unto *three functions*, which also had three several places assigned to them. The *first*, belonging to the "*divine presence*, and had the custody of the "*holiest types* thereof; the *Oracle*, the *Ark*, the "*Mercy-Seat*, &c. And was therefore called "*Sanctum Sanctorum*, the Holiest of all. The "*second* was for *ceremonial Worship* and *Atonement*: *viz.* by Sacrifices, Oblations, and other "Levitical Rites; the place thereof being the "*Sanctuary*, (wherein were the holy Vessels) "and the Court of Priests, wherein the Altar "of burnt Sacrifice did stand: The *third* was "for simple Worship, Prayer and Doctrine "(without any pomp or ceremony.) And the "place of this was the outward Court (called "*Atrium populi* †, and *Solomon's Porch* ‡) which "had therefore in it, no *ceremonial* implement "at all.

"The two first of these functions, with the "places belonging to them, were indeed particularly appropriated to the Law: for they were

* Pag. 14, 15, 16. † 2 Chron. iv. 9. Ib. vi. 12.
‡ Act. iii. 11.

"*Ceremonial*,

" *Ceremonial, Mystical, Secret, Levitical, Ju-*
" *daical and Temporal. Ceremonial,* as celebrated
" with much worldly pomp. *Mystical,* as figur-
" ing some spiritual things. *Secret,* as either
" performed behind the veil or curtain, or else
" sequestred and remote from the People. *Le-*
" *vitical,* as committed onely to the administra-
" tion of that tribe. *Judaical,* as ordained onely
" for the salvation of that people. And *Tempo-*
" *ral,* as instituted onely for a season, and not
" to continue. But the *sanctification* of the
" *third function,* and the place thereunto ap-
" pointed, was directly contrary to all the points
" alledged to the former two. First it was for
" *simple Worship, Prayer and Doctrine,* which
" were there to be performed and delivered in all
" *sincerity,* without any Ceremony or ceremonial
" Implement used therein. Secondly, there was
" no matter of *Mystery* therein to be seen; but
" whatsoever was *Mystical* in the Law or the
" Prophets, was there expounded. Thirdly, no-
" thing was there hidden or *secret* from the Peo-
" ple, but acted wholly without the veil and
" publickly for every man. Fourthly, it was not
" appropriated to the *Levites,* but common alike
" to all the tribes. Fifthly, not ordained for the
" *Jews* particularly, but for all Nations in ge-
" neral. And lastly, not to endure for a *time*
" (as those other two of the Law) but to con-

tinue

" tinue for ever, even after the Gentiles were
" called, as well as the Jews; that is, during
" the *time of the Gospel*, as well as of the *Law*.
" Therefore, saith God, by *Esaias* the Prophet,
" *my house shall be called an house of prayer to*
" *all Nations**. He said not, an house of *sa-*
" *crifice* to all Nations; for the *sacrifice* ended
" before the Calling of the *Gentiles*, and so
" they could have no part thereof. Nor an
" house of prayer for the *Jews onely*, for then
" had the *Gentiles* (when they were called) been
" likewise excluded: But *an house of prayer to*
" *all Nations*, i. e. Jews and Gentiles indiffer-
" ently, which therefore must have relation to
" the times of the Gospel: and consequently
" the sanctification of *that house*, and of that
" *function*, is also a *sanctification* of the *Churches*
" of the Gospel.

" We reade not therefore that Christ reformed
" any thing in the other two functions of the
" *Temple*, for they were now as at an end. But
" because this *third function* was for ever to
" continue in his Church, therefore he purged
" it of that which prophaned it, restored it to
" the original *sanctity;* And that the future
" world (which was the time of the Gospel)
" might better observe it, than the precedent,

* Es. lvi. 7.

" and

"and the time of the Law had done, he report-
"eth and confirmeth the decree, whereby it was
"sanctified, *It is written* (saith he) *my house*
"*shall be called an house of prayer to all people.*
"He saith, *my house*, excluding all other from
"having any property therein; for God will be
"joint-tenant with no man. And it shall be *an*
"*house of prayer for all people*, i. e. publick,
"for ever, and not private. The time also when
"our Saviour pronounced those words, is much
"to the purpose: for it was after he had turned
"out the Oxen and Doves, that is, the things
"for *sacrifice*. As though he thereby taught us,
"that when the *sacrifical Function* of the Tem-
"ple was ended, yet the *sanctification* of it to
"be an house of prayer ever remained."

Thus far this learned Gentleman, whose words (because every one to whom this may come, may not have that Book in readiness to peruse) for the readers satisfaction, I have faithfully transcribed. By which judicious and learned discourse it doth plainly appear, that the holiness of the Jews *Tabernacle* and *Temple* was not altogether *Levitical*, nor abolished, but of perpetual duration in Gospel-times, and that our *Churches* now are holy as theirs were then; the sanctification of theirs was the sanctification of ours; and therefore those promises of divine presence and blessing made to them in their

Church-assemblies, do belong to us, as well as to them.

To such therefore as neglect the *Church* now, and say, they can serve God as well elsewhere, as there; I say, 'Tis true, as we are private Christians and single persons, so no doubt according as the exigence of our affairs require, we may any where, or at any time, doe God acceptable service. It was foretold that in Gospel-times *In every place incense shall be offered to the Name of the Lord**. And as St. *Paul* bids us, *pray continually*, so our Saviour, *when you pray enter into your Closets*. But as we are members of the visible Mystical body, which is the Church of Christ, so we are bound to constant attendance on the publick service of God, *in his house*. Though not *altogether* now in respect of the place, yet still in respect of the *Congregation* that do and ought to meet in that place, and the worship of God that is, and ought there to be publickly performed. And *very much* in regard of the place too;

1. As it is a place freely given and surrendred up into the hands of God, the great Land-lord of the whole world, by the donation of the right owner, under God, of the Land, and Founder of the Edifice.

* Mal. i. 11.

2. As

2. As it is hallowed and dedicated to the publick service of God in such a solemn manner, as hath been the custom and usage of God's people in all ages of the world, both of the *Jews* in the Old Testament, and of the *Christians* in the New, from the beginning, in the purest times untill now, at the time when it was delivered up into God's possession, and when the use whereunto it shall ever serve, is established.

3. As it is accepted and owned by God, being thus given and set apart for him; and he is pleased to take *Livery and Seisin* of it, as his house (which is as really true of our *Churches* at their Consecration, though not as visibly, as it was of *Solomon's Temple** at its dedication) for the performance of his publick worship and service, and intitles it himself *My house of prayer* †. And the Argument which our Saviour useth to prove his property in that house, is taken from the use for which it was appointed; which extends its force equally to our *Churches* now, as to the *Temple* at *Jerusalem*, seeing they are both set apart to the same purpose, even for publick prayer to, and worship of God.

4. As 'tis a place to which God hath by promise assured his own gracious and heavenly presence and blessing, and where he may be and is

* 1 King iv. 10, 11. † Mat. xxi. 13.

 enjoyed,

enjoyed, in a more special manner than elsewhere, and consequently where there is more profit and good to be received by the service of God done in the Congregation and assembling together of his people there, than in any other house whatsoever. And therefore though there is not *that* holiness affixed to places now since our Saviour's coming into the World, as there was before, yet our assembling together in the *Church* is as holy now as then, and better than elsewhere. And wheresoever the Scripture seems to take away all religious differences of places, as if no place were holier than another, (as in *Mal.* i. 11. *Joh.* iv. 21. 1 *Tim.* ii. 8.) It is true of *inherent* holiness, but not of *relative*. And this must be always remembred (to prevent mistake) that the Holy Ghost doth no where compare private and profane places, with publick and consecrated, as if the worship we doe to him were as much to his Glory, or as good and profitable to our selves and others which we doe in those places, as that which we doe in the *Church*. But he compares publick places then, with publick now, and private with private; and his meaning is, that not onely at *Jerusalem*, and among the Jews God shall have an house for his publick worship, but in all Nations where he shall be pleased to bestow his Gospel. God will not be worshipped in the *Temple* at *Jerusalem* onely,

onely, nor shall his presence be tyed to that place more than to other such like houses of God elsewhere; but he will have houses, which shall be properly his own, and set apart for his publick worship and service *amongst all Nations*. It was a part of that heavy Yoke that was intolerable on the Necks of our Fathers, that they must take long and tedious journeys, to come from all Quarters of their Country to one place to worship; and that they did not dare, no not in case of absolute necessity, to perform publick service in any other place; yea that their very private Devotions were to be performed either *in* *, or *toward* † that place: But now, besides our Closets for our private Devotions, we have *Churches* in our several Towns, Parishes and Villages, where we may be sure to have God present to hear, accept and bless us, if we can find honest and good hearts to resort to them. Every place hath God's presence, and therefore is, in it self, alike sanctified for his service; but every place is not alike separated from common and profane use, and dedicated and consecrated to God, nor owned and accepted by him; and therefore we have no reason to expect God's presence, or to meet with the like blessing in one place as in another. And therefore (saith

* Luc. ii. 37. and xviii. 10. † Dan. vi. 10.

that

that holy and ancient Synod at *Gangra* in *Paphlagonia*, under *Constantine* the Emperour) *Omnem locum ædificatum in nomine Dei honoramus, et Congregationem in Ecclesia factam ob utilitatem communem recipimus* *. We do honour every place built in the Name of God, and do reverence and receive the Congregation met in the *Church* for the Common advantage. *Churches* then are holy, and to be respected and frequented rather than other places, because of their holy Use, and for the holy Assemblies there made. And therefore that same Council decreed, *Si quis docet domum Dei contemptibilem esse, et Conventus qui in ea celebrantur, anathema sit* †. Cursed be he that shall teach, that the House of God may be slighted, or the Congregations that assemble therein. And in the next Canon, they think fit to ordain, *Si quis extra Ecclesiam seorsum Conventus celebrat, &c* ‡. Cursed be he that shall keep any Convention out of the *Church*. And the same Synod (as History tells us §) condemned and deposed *Eustathius* Bishop of *Sebastia* in *Armenia*, for perswading such as

* *Concil.* Gangrens. *in subscriptione, habitum circa Ann. Domini.* 314.

† *Concil.* Gangrens. c. 5. *Citatur etiam in decret. dist.* 30. *Can.* 10.

‡ *Can.* 6.

§ Socrat. *Hist. Eccles. L.* ii. *c.* 43.

refrained

refrained the *Church* and publick Assemblies, to raise Conventicles and Brotherhood in their private Houses. "And in the Civil Law it is de-"creed, That the sacred Mystery or Mysteries "be not done in private Houses, but be cele-"brated in publick places, lest thereby things "be done contrary to the Catholick and Apos-"tolick Faith; unless they call to the celebrat-"ing of the same such Clerks of whose Faith "and Conformity there is no doubt made, or "else that are deputed thereunto by the good "will of the Bishop. If any thing be done to "the contrary, the House wherein these things "are done, shall be confiscated, and themselves "shall be punished at the discretion of the "Prince *."

Tis true St. *Paul* commands us *Every where to lift up holy hands without wrath* †. But those hands cannot be pure that are profane; and they cannot have other than such, who contemn the *Church*. *As therefore we exhort all men every where to worship God, even so for the performance of this service by the People of God assembled, we think not any place so good as the Church, nor any Exhortation so fit, as that of* David, *O worship the Lord in the Beauty of*

* *In collatione quinta Authenticorum.*

† 1 Tim. ii. 8.

Holiness.

Holiness *. But now (alas) we live to see those prophetique words, uttered by a Learned and judicious Gentleman above 60 years agoe, to be verified and fulfilled to the utmost †. He discerning then the great increase and growth of Sectaries in this Realm said; That time would soon bring it to pass (if it were not resisted) that God would be turned out of Churches into Barns, and from thence again into Fields, and Mountains, and under Hedges: and the Office of the Ministry (robbed of all dignity and respect) be as contemptible as those places; all Order, Discipline and Church-government left to the newness of Opinion and Mens fancies; yea and soon after, as many kinds of Religions spring up, as there are Parish Churches within *England*, every contentious and ignorant Person cloathing his Fancy with the Spirit of God, and his Imagination with the Gift of Revelation.

By all which hath been said (wherein I hope the candid Reader will pardon my Prolixity in this plain Vindication of the languishing Reputation of Church-assemblies) it appears that the speciality of Divine promises are made to the publick Dispensation of God's ordinances, and

* Hooker *Eccles. polit L. 5. Sect.* 16.

† *Sir* Walter Rawleigh *in his History of the World.* Lib. ii. Cap. 5. Sect. 1.

that

that we may expect a greater Blessing upon them, in our Church-assemblies, than elsewhere.

But I know no promise of God at all, made to such Preaching and Meetings, as are in question. God hath not engaged himself for a Blessing to any People, waiting on him (as they count it) in a way out of his appointment, yea contrary to it. But as he hath forbidden to hear Intruders, *Jer.* xxvii. 14, 15. So he hath expresly said, there shall no Blessing at all accompany such a Ministry and such attendance on it. Let that place in *Jeremiah* * be noted, *I sent them not, nor commanded them, therefore they shall not profit this People at all, saith the Lord.* *Sive vera prædicent, sive falsa,* Saith a *Presbyterian* † divine: Whether they preach that which is true, or that which is false. The question is, not *de facto*, but *de jure*, not what they teach, but by what warrant. Thence it was, as *Tarnovius* ‡ thinks, that our Saviour Christ rebuked the Devil, and commanded him silence, not suffering him to speak, when he confessed and declared the most necessary and Soul-saving truth in the World, *viz.* that *Christ was the holy one of God* §, because he had no calling so to

* Jer. xxiii. 32.

† Vines *Sermon on* 2 Pet. ii. 1. *p.* 9.

‡ Tarnov. *de S. minist.* c. 8.

§ Mark i. 25.

doe.

doe. The words of St. *Paul* are full to the same purpose. *How shall they believe on him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a Preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent*?* The Apostle speaks of such preaching and hearing as should beget Faith, and by which, Grace is ordinarily wrought and increased in the Soul, and upon which, People may expect God's Blessing. Now thus none can hear without a Preacher, neither can any thus preach, *i. e.* profitably to beget Faith, except he be sent. They cannot be succesfull in their Ministry without a Mission. They may *talk*, as Usurpers; but not *preach*, as God's Ambassadours. They may satisfie the *Itch* of the *Ear*, but they cannot be instrumental to work Grace in the heart. God will not concur with that Ministry he sends not. Our Saviour Christ saith, *John* x. 8. *All that ever came before me are Thieves and Robbers.* Why, *Moses* and the Prophets, the Priests and Leyites were before Christ. Were they all *Thieves* and *Rob-*

* Rom. x. 15. *Quisquis in Ecclesia docet, non vocatus et missus à Christo, invadit alienam possessionem, fur est et latro; venit in nomine suo, non Dei; Christi minister non est, verbum Christi non habet: imo ne quidem Ecclesiæ dici minister debet, quem ipsa non vocavit; turbator est boni ordinis, causa confusionis, quæ non à Deo est.* Nic. Arnobd. *in refutat. Cat.* Racov. *p.* 724.

bers,

bers, and none of them true *Pastours*? The *Emphasis* lies in the word [*came*] which being rightly understood, makes it as true, that all that ever *came*, or shall come after Christ are *Thieves* and *Robbers* also, as well as those that *came* before him. St. *Hierome*'s * note upon the text makes it clear. *Venerunt, inquit Christus, non qui missi sunt, de quibus Propheta, Veniebant a se et ego non mittebam eos.* Our Saviour doth not say that all that were sent before him, were *Thieves* and *Robbers*, but all that *came* before me. Plainly shewing, that whosoever shall *come* amongst the People of God his Church, to perform the Office of the Ministry, of his own accord, without a lawfull *Sending*, is a *Thief* and a *Robber*, and none of Christ's true *Sheep will*, or ought to *hear him*.

Objection. But it will be said, the Preaching and Ministry of such Persons as are in question, is the Preaching and Ministry of Persons sent; for they are Persons in holy Orders, and Ministers ordained.

Answer 1. I deny not, but that some of such Persons as are in question, may be lawfully ordained Ministers (all are not, to my knowledge) yet it followeth not presently from thence, that they are *sent* to preach, or to perform Acts of the

* Hierom. *ad vers.* Pelag. *l.* 2.

Ministry.

Ministry. For it may so be in a true setled and constituted Church, that for a lawfull Cause, and by lawfull Authority, a Person ordained may be deposed, and justly suspended from performing any ministerial Acts; as *Abiathar* in the Church of the Jews was by King *Solomon*. Otherwise, Ministers in their Office were Lawless, and exempt from all legal and just Restraint and Censure. And although a Person in holy Orders cannot have his Ordination ordinarily made void by any, *quoad internam potestatem*, in regard of the inward Power of Order that is conferred on him in his Ordination, so as upon his Restauration he need be re-ordained; yet it may be made void *quoad externam executionem*, in regard of the outward Execution of that Power in the Church, either in publick or private, either for a set-time or season, or else during his Life. It is in the Power of the Church and Governours thereof, to suspend a Minister from the Execution of his Office, though it be not in their Power to rase out that *Characterem insculptum*, that intrinsical Authority received in his Ordination. And a Person so lawfully suspended by Authority, as is said, may he in such a case execute the Office of the Ministry, or may he not? If so, then Acts of lawfull Authority in the Church signifie nothing; Governours and Government, and Church-discipline is a mere

empty

tmpty Name, and but a Cypher. Then might *Abiathar* have executed the High-priest's Office, notwithstanding King *Solomon*'s Exauctoration of him. And so the Ordinance of God in the Church, to which all stand bound in *Conscience*, to be in *subjection* *, will be made void and of none effect. If not, then such Ministers as notwithstanding their legal Restraint, or suspension from Execution of their Office, do yet constantly execute the same, by preaching and other ministerial Duties, otherwise than by the Law they are allowed, cannot be said to be sent of God, since they are inhibited by God's Vicegerents on Earth; and consequently have not that sending, which the word of God saith is necessary to those, whose preaching is to be instrumental to work Faith, and other saving Graces in the Hearts of God's People.

Answer 2. But what calling or sending can such a Minister as is in question, pretend to, for his setting up a Course of House-preaching, or other ministerial Acts, in the place or Parish, where there is a publick constant preaching Minister established by Law? If he hath any, it must be either *extraordinary*, or *ordinary*, for there is not a third way of calling or sending.

Extraordinary calling or sending is that, which

* Rom. xiii. 5.

is

is done by God himself immediately, without the Concurrence or Ministry of any humane Help or Authority. *Not of man, nor by man* *. Either,

1. By divine Vision or Revelation: and thus St. *Paul* was called and sent to preach the Gospel at *Macedonia*. *A Vision appeared to* Paul *in the Night* †, *saying, Come over into* Macedonia *and help us; And after he had seen the Vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into* Macedonia, *assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel unto them.*

2. By secret impulse on mens spirits for this work, wrought by the extraordinary Power of God in the Primitive times. Such was *Philip* ‡ the Deacon's going to the City of *Samariah*, and preaching the Gospel unto them, after the dispersing the Church at *Jerusalem*. Such also was the Calling of those who at the same dispersion, first preached Christ at *Phœnicia and Cyprus* § and the Hand of God was with them, though otherwise they were but private Persons.

Now I think no wise men will pretend to these *extraordinary* Callings or Sendings in these days. It is sufficient to say they are *extraordinary*, and such as but in like Cases cannot be

* Gal. i. 1. † Act. xvi. 9, 10.
‡ Act. viii. 5. § Ib. xi. 19, 20.

expected.

expected. *Extraordinary* onely take place where *ordinary* are not to be had. The internal and *extraordinary* sending is secret and invisible, and therefore it is not sufficient for a man to say that he is sent of God, seeing every Heretick may say the same; but he ought to prove his *extraordinary* and invisible Calling by the working of some *Miracle* *; or by some special testimony of *Scripture*. 'Tis true *John Baptist* had an immediate and extraordinary Calling, and yet wrought no Miracle †, (that was reserved for the *Messiah*, of whom he was the immediate Forerunner, to manifest himself unto the world by) but then, that Calling of his was foretold, and witnessed by plain testimonies of *Scripture* ‡. And the manner of his Birth, and Condition of his Life (as it was well known to all *Israel*) were no other than miraculous and extraordinary.

Ordinary calling or sending to any place, to preach the Gospel, and to execute the Office of a Minister there, in a setled and constituted Church is, when a Person in holy Orders hath the cure and care of a Flock or Congregation of God's People committed to him, to preach the Gospel to them, and to perform all other mi-

* 2 Joh. 7. Exod. iv. 2. viii. 19. Joh. v. 36. Mat. x. 8. 2 Cor. xii. 12.

† Joh. i. 6. ‡ Es. xl. 3. Mal. iii. 1.

nisterial

nisterial Acts amongst them, by the Ministry of those Men, who under God, have Authority so to doe, according to good and wholsome Ecclesiastical Laws and Constitutions in that behalf made and established. *God calleth ordinarily by his Church, her voice is his. Therefore whensoever the Church of God, that is, the learned, wise, godly, and such as the Church hath publickly appointed for that purpose, saith to any, Thou shalt be sent to such a place, Thou shalt goe for us; then doth God call; Saith* Mr. *Perkins* *. Sending implies the Act of another that hath Power and Authority to send. He cannot be said to be sent, that comes to a place, and there takes upon him to preach and doe all ministerial Acts, of his own accord. He comes not in Christ's Name, but his own. And a Christian can in nothing shew himself more impudent, than in embracing such, as Teachers sent from God, that come in their own Names. *If one come in his own Name, him ye will receive* †: saith Christ to the Jews, blaming them much for it. And because there are so many that are apt to run before they are sent, it is necessary, that wheresoever any Person undertakes to preach the word, his calling to that work be clear and ma-

* Perk. *de dig. minist. pag.* 459. *and* 462.

† Joh. v. 43.

nifest,

nifest, both in respect of his own Comfort and the Peoples profit. Though St. *Paul* was immediately called of God, yet he was sent to *Ananias** for imposition of his hands, that it might be clear to the Church that he was called. And when he was to be sent to the *Gentiles*, he was again by imposition of hands *ordained*† or appointed to be their Doctour, that so his Calling might be publickly declared to be lawfull, and that none else might intrude into it. And if this were necessary in him, who was immediately called of God, how much more necessary is it in all those, who have not now that extraordinary Calling, but onely are mediately ordained and appointed to that work by those men, who under God have power to send and appoint Pastours over the several Flocks of his People in the Church?

Now if such a person as is in the question, cannot make out his calling or sending, by one of these two ways, to such a Town or Parish, where he takes upon him thus to execute the Office (or any part of it) of a Minister; certainly then he hath no Calling or sending at all: But is like one that shall enter into another man's house, at the *window*, or some other way, than by the door: and that (we know) is no fair

* Act. ix. 17. † Ib. xiii. 3.

possession of an house; he that enters in at the windows, ought to be thrown out of doors. Of such our Saviour saith, *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entreth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a Thief and a Robber**. And, if such †, as they can be no other, who baulking the lawfull and ordinary way of entrance by the Authority of those, who derive their power on earth from Christ, and break in without, (yea against the Laws and Leave of their Governours that act in Christ's Name and Stead) then are not they sent of God, and consequently have none of God's promises of blessing annexed to their Ministry.

This is that which renders the best actions that can be performed by the Sons of Men, to be sinfull, when they are done unlawfully, and by such as have no particular Calling or Command for the doing of them. This doth quite alter and diversifie the nature of actions, so as that they are varied from what otherwise they would be, to some other things. It is a rule as true, as old; *Bonum extra proprium subjectum, in malum mutatur;* Every good thing, out of

* Joh. x. 1.

† *Qui autem non fideliter intravit, neque per Christum, quidni infideliter agat, et contra Christum.* Bernard. *ut citatur à* Tho. Mortono. *Apol. cath. pag.* 62.

its

its proper place and subject, is turned into evil. *V. g.* In the *natural* body of man, the hand is a very good and usefull member, for the offices of common life; yet if the hand be out of its proper place, and grow either out of the Head or Leg, or elsewhere, where it ought not, it is no longer a good or usefull member, but a deformed and monstrous excrescence of Nature. In the body *politick* or state, the execution of wrath upon him that doeth evil, is a very just and good work; yet if it be done by one that hath no Authority or Commission, at least in such a place or circuit, it is not justice, but murther. *Ammon* abusing his Sister *Tamar* by filthy incest, ought by the Law of God to dye, *Absolom* killed him with the Sword; and in so doing he did the very thing that God commanded *: Yet *Absolom* sinned greatly in doing it, because he was not the man that ought to have done it, but *David* the King. In the *Ecclesiastick* body, the Church, the preaching the word is an excellent ordinance of God, for the saving of them that believe, as *foolish* † as the world do account it: But if it be performed by one that hath no Authority or Commission for so doing, nay, that is under a just and legal prohibition and restraint from the doing it at all,

* Lev. xviii. 9, 29. † 1 Cor. i. 21.

it is not preaching, but quite another thing, even what the Apostle calls it, *beating the air* *. Whensoever a Commandment is limited to persons and places, that Command makes it a sin to them, if they leave the thing required undone; and the not commanding, yea, forbidding, makes it a sin to others that shall doe it, because 'tis the Precept that makes the thing to such persons, in such places, to be lawfull or sinfull. Wrath hath been revealed from Heaven on such, as have rashly adventured on a thing that in it self hath been very good, yet had no particular Command for it. This appears plainly in the case of *Uzzah* †. Though his intention was good, yet it belonged not to him to touch the *Ark*, for the charge and care thereof was committed to others ‡. It is the Policy of Satan, if he cannot prevail with men to abide and abound in those things which are (materially) evil, but they will needs be doing good, then he will draw them on to doe that good unlawfully, without a calling to it or warrant for it. And it were well that People who are so easily misled by the specious pretext of good, were not ignorant of this Wile of the Devil, whereby he deceives simple souls, not a few. When we set upon the

* 1 Cor. ix. 26. Job xv. 3. † 2 Sam. vi. 6, 7.
‡ Numb. iv. 15.

performance

performance of any thing, it should not be enough to weigh with our selves how *good* it is, but to look what *warrant* we have to doe it. The manner of performances is to be regarded, as well as the matter: For God stands upon Circumstances as well as Duties. *It shall be then our righteousness, if we observe to doe all the Commandments before the Lord our God, AS HE HATH COMMANDED US**. Say we doe what is commanded, yet if we doe it not as he commanded us, it is not right in God's sight, who requires that a thing be not onely good, but also regularly performed. It is not the material goodness of the work, that will free us from sin, but the Command we have out of God's word for the doing it. Neither can we depend upon any promise for a blessing, when we have not God's Precept for the action.

The promise of edification in faith, knowledge and holiness, is specially appropriated to the Ministry of that Person, who is regularly and orderly in God's ways, set over a Congregation. Christians own pastours have a more special dispensation of the Grace of God given them, to them-ward; as St. *Paul* the Doctour of the *Gentiles* had, towards that People, of whom he was appointed the proper Minister. And (saith

* Deut. vi. 25.

Mr.

Mr. *Baines) If this were well considered it would cure in us that affectation of the confluence of strangers, when our hearts do not so fervently embrace our own Pastours. And it should instruct People to depend especially upon those who are set over them; for these are they who are furnished from God in an eminent manner, with grace towards them. They are foolish sheep that know not their own shepherds voice, and foolish People that know not their own Ministers**.

And in reason, whose Ministry may we think God will bless, either his, to whom the Flock is committed by himself; who *is over them in the Lord*†: whom *God hath made their overseer*‡; who have *the rule over them, watching for their Souls, as those that must give an account* §? Or his, who runs before he is sent, who hath no lawfull call to the Congregation, *ordinary* or *extraordinary*; who hath no relation at all to the Flock, *whose own the sheep are not* ‖: he having no charge of them, nor any account to make for them (other than for his irregular intrusion amongst them, taking upon him to doe that he hath no right to doe, and for seducing them away from their own Pastour) be his parts

* *Mr.* P. Baines *on* Eph. iii. 2. † 1 Thes. v. 12.
‡ Act. xx. 28. § Heb. xiii. 17. ‖ Joh. x. 12.

and

and qualifications otherwise Angelical, and his Doctrine never so Evangelical?

Pastours of Congregations are called *Christ's Ambassadours* * to their People. It is their Commission that makes their Embassie successfull. Another, perhaps, may be of equal, or greater fitness for the Employment, but he onely that hath deputation for the service, is received and hath audience. Those that have no lawful mission to a Congregation, but intrude themselves amongst them, may speak the truth, as well as they that have; yet of him that acts by lawfull appointment, we may say, that he *preacheth with Authority*, and not like those that come in by stealth and usurpation, and have no other right there to preach, than what themselves have made. They are called *overseers* †. It is not for every man to oversee the estate of another; they onely can do it, who by some Deed or Commission are impowered to undertake it. Nay (which is a dreadful Consideration) they must so oversee the Flock ‡ that they may *give an account for their Souls.* Is there any such charge given to, or undertaken by those unsent teachers, who love to be heard and seen in exercising their parts, but not in taking cure or

* 2 Cor. v. 20. † Act. xx. 28.
‡ Heb. xiii. 17.

charge

charge of Souls? They are called *Stewards* *. It is not for any one to be a steward in another man's house, to feed the Family; but for him onely whom the master of that house shall appoint. The ministerial parts performed by a lawfull Pastour to his own Flock, are like *Jacob*'s blessing his Sons †; another man might have done it as rhetorically, and, perhaps, as affectionately, but not so effectually, because none had that Right and Authority to doe it, as he. Of all Acts, those that are done *ex officio*, by virtue of an office, and from a lawfull designation and appointment for the execution of that office, to, or for, such a Person or People, are under a more solemn assurance of a blessing. It is no Solecism to say, God will hear their Prayers, and bless their Pains, when he will neither hear, nor bless the Prayers or Pains of any else. My *Servant* Job *shall pray for you* ‡ (saith God) *for him will I accept*. *Eliphaz* and his two friends were good men, yet God would not give answer to them, but to *Job* onely. See *Gen.* xx. 7. *Es.* xxxvii. 4. *Jam.* v. 14.

If that place in *Matthew* § be urged, to prove a promise of a blessing to such preaching and meetings as are in question; *Where two or*

* 1 Cor. iv. 1.
† Gen. xlix.
‡ Job xlii. 8.
§ Mat. xviii. 20.

three

three are met together in my name, there am I present in the midst of them.

I answer, that although I conceive the primary and principal Intent and Scope of our Saviour in that place, was not to speak of religious Meetings, for the preaching and hearing of his word; but of the Meetings of Ecclesiastical Judges of the Jewish *Sanhedrin* in their Consistory (as the Context doth declare) yet because all God's promises are *great* and *pretious*, and we ought not to lose ought of them, but improve them to the utmost for his Glory and our Comfort; therefore suppose it be taken and to be understood of religious Meetings also (as 'tis so applied by the *Church of England* in her Liturgy, yet to no other, but our Church-assemblies) yet (I say) that text annexeth a Promise onely to such Meetings as are *in Christ's Name.* Now the meaning of that phrase is commonly expounded to be, at my Command. *Nam in nomine Christi, idem est quod ex authoritate.* So our Saviour himself useth the phrase; *I am come in my Father's Name* *, *id est*, at his Command; as he expounds it himself. This Commandment have I received from the Father †. So St. *Paul* useth the phrase, *Now we command you, brethren, in the Name of our Lord*

* Joh. v. 43. † Joh. x. 18. xii. 49. xiv. 31.

Jesus

Jesus Christ *; id est,* by the Authority of our Lord Christ, committed unto us by him, as if Christ should command by us †. So every inferiour officer amongst us, doth use the phrase, I require you *in the King's Name, id est,* by Authority derived from him. See *Act.* iv. 7.

And should we extend the promise, without restraint, to other Meetings under pretence of religious Worship, than such as are grounded on Christ's Authority;

1. Then we should make our own wills, fancies and affections, masters of our actions, and endeavour to bring down the presence of Christ to such irregular Conventions, as are altogether disagreeing with, yea contrary to his Will and Command, which were not onely absurd, but impious to attempt or think.

2. Then also may a Congregation of 1000 People, divide themselves (contrary to good Laws of God, his Church and the Realm) into 500 Couples, in so many several places, and in so many several forms of worship, and yet expect Christ's presence and blessing with them all, in ways so abominable to God, and so ap-

* 2 Thes. iii. 6. 1 Cor. v. 4.

† Act. xix. 5. *Significatur non forma quâ in baptisando usi sint Apostoli; sed authoritas Christi, ex cujus præscripto utebantur baptismo.* Chamier. T. 1. L. 2. c. 4. 5. 5. p. 15. vide Jewel's *Reply to* Harding's *Answer. Pag.* 116.

parently

parently destructive to his intire body the Church, which he hath purchased with his most pretious bloud.

3. Where were then the threatnings of his withdrawing from our Assemblies upon just occasion? God hath said, *Your Sabbaths, your Calling of Assemblies, I cannot away with, it is iniquity, even your solemn Meetings; my Soul hates them, they are a trouble to me, I am weary to bear them* *. And, *I hate, I despise your Feast-days, I will not smell in your solemn Assemblies* †, *i. e.* I will not accept with Favour (as I did *Noah*'s Sacrifice ‡) their solemn Assemblies. In another place the Holy Ghost useth the same expression, *I will not smell the Savour of your sweet Odours* §. It is a Judgment (saith *Ainsworth*) opposed to that blessing promised in *v.* xii. *I will walk among you.* God threatens to deny his presence to their Assemblies, and one reason is given by a Divine of the *Presbyterian* Judgment ‖; *Because they were not any way of Divine institution, but of their own invention, and therefore all along they are called* your *or* thine.

Now shew me where Christ in all the Old or

* Es. i. 13, 14. † Amos v. 21.
‡ Gen. viii. 21. § Lev. xxvi. 31.
‖ *Mr.* Hutcheson *in* Amos v. 21.

New

New Testament, doth either command, or allow any such Ministry, and attendance on it, as is in question, and then I shall acknowledge it to be the Ordinance of God, and that this promise belongs to it: but not till then.

In the mean time I may well (without any digression) retort upon the objectours, and tell them, that in my Judgment, they are far out of the way, either of obedience to Christ's Command, or of hopes of enjoying his blessing promised, who in resorting to such kind of Meetings, for which they have neither a command nor promise, separate and withdraw themselves from the publick assemblies, and attendance on his worship and ordinances there, where God hath assured us of his presence and blessing, and whither he hath enjoyned us constantly to repair. For as that Minister, who shall upon any pretence whatsoever of his own forsake a Congregation over whom he was placed by God, and goe to another without any lawfull call, is like *Jonah*, who being sent by God to *Nineve*, sinned greatly in going to *Tarshish*, though he had preached never so duely and diligently there: So those People who in any measure neglect the publick, for those private assemblies, are like *Micah*, who in the time of the *Judges*, when there was a publick Ministry in the place which the Lord had chosen for that purpose, instituted

stituted a private worship and ministry in his own *house*, a certain peculiar *Levite* being called and set apart for that work. And no wise man that shall reade his story, will think it safe to follow his example. Well may such a Person flatter himself in his course, and say in his heart, as he, *Now I know the Lord will doe me good, seeing I have a Levite to my Priest* *. But (as *Junius*) *hominis imperiti sermo est, et in pietate parùm instituti* †. That saying of his shews him to have but little wit, less religion, and that he was but in a golden dream or Fool's Paradise all that while, though he thought himself wiser and in a better case than his neighbours. But this was done when there was *no King in* Israel, *and every man did that which was right in his own eyes*, otherwise so abominable an act could never have passed so clearly as it did.

By such I would be soberly and soundly resolved of this demand. Are the People of *England* in their present state and condition (assembling themselves together in publick places appointed for God's worship, under the teaching and ministry of their lawfull Pastours, that are set over them by Authority) a true Church, or true Churches, or not?

If they say, no: they doe that which God

* Judg. xvii. 13. † Junius *in loc.*

(blessed

(blessed be his name) hath not yet done, unchurch us; and lay us under a judgment, which he hath not yet laid upon us, *viz.* a divorce from *Jesus Christ. Yet thou, O Lord, art in the midst of us, and we are called by thy name; leave us not* *. Through the infinite goodness of the Most High †, we have wherewithall to confute that unchristian and uncharitable judgment of theirs, since we have both the *matter* and the *form* of a true Church.

The *matter* is a multitude of rational Creatures that profess saving truth contained in the word of God. *Simon Magus* and the *Eunuch* upon their profession, were admitted Members of the Church; and Members do constitute the body.

The *form* of a true Church is a gracious call into the dignity of the Children of God, so as that *Christ* becomes united to them. As the *form* of a man is the Soul united to the body, so the *form* of a Church, which is his body, is *Christ* united to it. We have the word and laws of *Christ*, and those he makes effectual for the convincing of all, and conversion of some. And this is an irrefragable argument to evince our

* Jer. xiv. 9.

† *Si ecclesiam non habet Christus, nisi inter P. tantum, nimium pauper factus est.* Hieron. *adv. Luciferanos.*

Church

Church to be a true Church, even in the judgment of the *Presbyterian* Divines themselves. For to those of the *Independent* way, that separated from them, these are their words; "We "beseech you to consider, whether ye did not "receive the work of conversion from sin to "God, which ye presume to be wrought in you, "first of all in those publick assemblies from "which ye now separate? And if ye found "*Christ* walking amongst us, how is it, that ye "do now leave us? If the presence of *Christ*, "both of his power and grace, be with us, why "do ye deny your presence? Are ye holyer and "wiser than *Christ?* Is not this an evident "token, that we are true Churches, and have a "true Ministry, because we have the seal of our "Ministry, even the conversion of many Sons "and Daughters to God? Doth not the Apostle "from this very ground argue the truth of his "Apostleship*? Is it not apparent that our Mi-"nisters are sent by God, because their Em-"bassage is made succesfull by God, for the "good of Souls? *Did ye ever reade of true con-"version ordinarily in a false Church? Will the "Lord concur with those Ministers he sends not? "Doth not the prophet say the quite contrary?* "Jer. xxiiii. 23. And therefore either renounce

* 2 Cor. ix. 2.

"your

"your conversion, or be converted from that "great sin of separating from us *."

Again, where there are the infallible marks of a true Church, there is a true Church. But we have the infallible marks of a true Church, *viz.* the word of *Christ* truly taught, and his Sacraments rightly administred.

First for the word of *Christ.* The Church is (according to the proper signification of the word ἐκκλησία) a People called forth from the rest of the world; *called to be Saints* †. Now the best note to know a People called, is by the voice calling; this was ever an infallible mark of *Christ*'s Church. First among the Apostles, who were called out from amongst others, by the word of *Christ*, to become followers of him. Then amongst others, as they were added to the Church, they were called by the word; witness that great work of conversion wrought by the Ministry of St. *Peter*, At one Sermon three thousand were severed from the rest of the world, and *added to the Church* ‡.

Next for the Sacraments, these rightly administred are certain marks of a true Church; for they are the Seals set by God to his word, the signs of his Covenant, whereby he binds

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt.* p. 122.

† Rom. i. 7. 1 Cor. i. 2. ‡ Acts ii.

himself

himself to be our God, and receives us to be his People. They are sure pledges of his love to us, which we really have, till we come actually to be possessed of perfect holiness and glory with *Christ*. Whilst we have these blessed ordinances of his amongst us, his word truly preached, and his Sacraments rightly administred, it is not the rash censure of a few giddy heads, that can unchurch us.

If they say we are a true Church; then God is ever with us, (*Es.* xlv. 14.) in our assemblies at all times, and in all parts of his worship. *Lo, I am with you always to the end of the world**. *And I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they shall be my People*†. Thence the Holy Ghost in Scripture, calls the Church, *his house*‡; *the dwelling place of his Name, the place where his honour dwells,* the Presence Chamber of the great King, &c. And as the glory of the Lord did sensibly appear in the *Tabernacle*, Exod. xl. 34. and in the *Temple*, 1 Kings viii. 10. So doth it now in our Church-assemblies, as really and truly, though not as visibly, as then. *For if the Ministration of Death was glorious, how shall not the Ministration of the Spirit be glo-*

* Matt. xxviii. 20. † 2 Cor. vi. 16.
‡ Ps. lxxiv. 7. lxxvi. 2.

 rious?

rious? If the Ministration of Condemnation be glory, much more doth the Ministration of Righteousness exceed in glory. If that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious *.

Now if God be present with, and in our assemblies, how dare any that are, or ought to be Members thereof, absent themselves? Dare ye to withdraw at any time from God's presence, whose *face* at all times ye are commanded to *seek* †? I speak not of his omnipresence, in regard of the immensity of his essence, which fills all places. God fills every place, and fills it by containing that place in himself. But I speak of that special presence, which he hath promised to afford to his Church, manifesting himself in that place and assembly more graciously, than elsewhere.

If then we retain our Conjunction with *Christ*, why do ye refuse Communion with us? May we not therefore justly charge you as guilty of making a *Schism* in the Body of *Christ*? That we may, by your own Doctrine. For (say the *Presbyterian* Divines) "If the Apostle calls "those divisions of the Church of *Corinth*, "wherein Christians did not separate into divers "formed Congregations, of several Commu-

* 2 Cor. iii. 7, 11. † Psal. xxvii. 8.

"nions,

" nions, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, " *Schism*, 1 *Cor.* i. 10. may not your Secession " from us, and profession that ye cannot joyn " with us as Members, and setting up Congre- " gations of another Communion be more pro- " perly called *Schism* * ?" And presently after they distinguish (out of *Camero)* of a two-fold *Schism*, *negative* and *positive*. The former is when men do peaceably and quietly draw from Communion with a Church, not making a head against that Church from which they are departed: The other is, when persons so withdrawing, do consociate and draw themselves into a distinct and opposite Body, setting up a Church against a Church, which *Camero* calls *Schism by way of Eminency*. Now if this were true Doctrine in those days, against those who were then concerned in it; I know no reason why the space of a few years should so alter the case, but that it is as true now against themselves, who now doe what they then condemned in others, *viz.* not onely withdraw from our publick assemblies, but set up *Church* against *Church*. And therefore (to use their own words) " Ye " must not be displeased with us, but with your " selves, if we blame you as guilty of positive " *Schism*." And that is no small fault in the

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt.* p. 113, 114.

judgment of any sound Divine, but a far greater than the fault, upon which they pretend separation. The things for which they make a rent, are not so great a fault in the Church, as the want of Charity in them which prompts them so to doe. It is a sin of the first rate, and one of the greatest size that a Christian can commit, in the judgment of the Brethren of the *Nonconformists* themselves, though now it goes down glib with too many of them, who notwithstanding are obliged to the extirpation thereof, not onely by the common bond of Religion and Christianity, but also by the second Article of their *solemn League and Covenant*, taken with hands lifted up to the most high God; wherein they rank it with *Popery, Superstition, Heresie, Profaneness, and whatsoever is contrary to sound Doctrine and the power of godliness*. Let the words of Mr. *Baxter** be noted as an evidence of this truth. "If the Scripture were Conscionably "observed, men would take Church-divisions "for a greater sin than Adultery or Theft. Mu- "tinies and Divisions do more infallibly destroy "an Army than almost any other fault, or weak- "ness: and therefore all Generals do punish "Mutineers with death, as well as flat Traytors. "Our Union is our strength and beauty: com- "monly they that divide for the bringing in of

* *Christian Concord. pag.* 119.

"any

" any inferiour truth or practice, do but destroy " that truth and piety, that was there before. I " like not him that will cure the head-ach by " cutting the throat; yea, it is a greater sin " than Murther (saith Mr. *Paget*) A Murtherer " killeth but one man or two *, but a Schismatick " goes about, as much as in him lies, to destroy " the Church of God. Yea, it is worse to make " a *Schism* in the Church, than to Sacrifice to " an Idol, saith Mr. *Calamy* † out of St. *Cy-* " *prian*."

And may Christians then play at fast and loose with the bonds of holy Communion at their pleasure? St. *Peter* could say, *Lord, whither shall we goe? thou hast the words of Eternal Life* ‡. Where this word is truly Preach'd in the way of *Christ*'s appointment, and the rest of his worship celebrated accordingly, wo be to those that are not found there also. Christians in the pure and primitive times, did not take this Liberty in point of Church-fellowship, but (by the acknowledgment of the Divines before mentioned, and Oh that their Practices now did not contradict their words then) " All such who pro- " fessed Christianity, held Communion together, " as one Church, notwithstanding the difference " in judgment in lesser things, and much cor-

* *Hæresiog. pag.* 78. † *Serm.* Decemb. 25, 1644.
‡ Joh. vi. 68.

" ruption

" ruption in Conversation *." *Cain* was the first that ever separated from the Church; *he went out from the presence of God* †. God is every where, the meaning therefore is, from his *Church*, the place of his publick worship, which was then in his Father's Family. And will it be safe for any to follow such a President? The Apostle pronounceth a *woe to them that walk in the way of* Cain ‡. Those that walk in his way, can expect no less than to arrive at the place whither he is gone before. And if ye would know who they are that so walk, the Apostle tells you, *these are they that separate themselves* §. *Pareus* his gloss on the words are not unworthy observation: *Quia sibi ipsi fingunt peculiarem cultum, ideo sese segregant ab eorum Ecclesia ac cœtu* ‖. They feign to themselves a peculiar way and manner of worship, therefore they will not joyn with us in ours, but withdraw from our assemblies; as if he had purposely described the humour of the men of our times. However such may pretend to the Spirit, as if they were more Sanctified than their Brethren, yet the Apostle by infallible guidance, pronounceth them *Sensual not having the Spirit.* And that is the reason they keep the Unity of the Church no better.

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt. pag.* 120. † Gen. iv. 16.
‡ Jude, 11. § Ib. 19. ‖ Pareus *in Loc.*

For

For (as *Fulgentius* saith) *Tales itaq; faciles sunt ad divisionem, quia spiritum non habent, in quo uno membra Christi charam servant Spiritualiter unitatem* *. Such Persons are prone to all divisions, because they have not that Spirit, in whom alone all the Members of *Christ* do Spiritually keep Unity among themselves, as a dear and pretious thing. As the Soul in man's Body doth cease to quicken any Member sundred from the Body, and the scattered bones in *Ezekiel*'s Vision, received no life till they were incorporated and knit together in one by *Sinews*, *Flesh*, and *Skin* † : so the Spirit of God, which is the Soul of this mystical Body, denies the derivation of Grace and Comfort, to those that separate themselves from it.

If they say, we are a true Church; and that they and their Party separating from us and meeting in private assemblies, are a Church also, and so they do not separate and withdraw themselves from the Church.

Then I say that their Church, in that case, refusing Communion with ours, is, (at least) a distinct Church from ours; and so there are two Churches of *England* in this Nation. And so they make *Christ* to have two bodies distinct under one head; which is contrary to sundry

* Fulgent. *l.* 2. *ad* Monim. *pag.* 67. † Ezek. xxxvii. 7.

plain

plain Texts of Scripture. *Though there be threescore Queens, and fourscore Concubines, and Virgins without number, yet my Dove, my undefiled is but one*. We being many are one body in* Christ†. And, *As the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many, are one body, so is Christ*‡. Again, *There is one Body, one Spirit, one Hope, one Lord, one Faith*§, &c. And, *is* Christ *divided*‖*?*

There cannot be two such opposite Churches in one Nation, but one of them must needs be an Harlot, and not the Spouse of *Christ*. And that their Church (as they call it) and not ours, is so, may easily be made to appear to any man that will vouchsafe to weigh matters in the balance of Reason and Judgment. The whole World is divided betwixt God and the Devil; there is not a third Party that can challenge any share in the Race of mankind. All Societies and Companies of Men and Women in the world, are either the Church of *Christ*, or the Synagogue of Satan, *Rev.* iii. 9. An assembly of Saints¶, or a congregation of evil doers, *Psal.*

* Cant. vi. 8, 9. † Rom. xii. 5. ‡ 1 Cor. xii. 12. § Eph. iv. 45. ‖ 1 Cor. i. 13.

¶ *Sit una Eva mater cunctorum viventium, et una ecclesia parens omnium Christianor. Sicut illam maledictus Lamech in duas*

Psal. xxvi. 5. And that theirs is not the Church of *Christ*, appears thus: Those assemblies or congregations where there is no true and lawfull Pastor, nor true and lawfull Flock, are not the Churches of *Christ*, but of Satan: for (as it hath been shewed before out of the Scriptures and Fathers) a lawfull Minister *, and a Flock or Congregation of People lawfully committed to his charge, make up a Church: that is the definition of a particular Church. But their Churches (as they call them) have neither true and lawfull Pastors, nor Flocks: therefore they are not the Churches of *Christ*, but the Synagogues of Satan, and Congregations of evil doers. That they have no true and lawfull Pastors, is clear. 1. Because many of them that head those unlawfull meetings and assemblies, were never ordained by Prayer and Imposition of hands, as by Gospel-Rules they ought to be, but are mere Lay-men that take upon them to preach and perform Ministerial Duties, that were never called thereunto. This is true not onely

duas divisit uxores, sic hanc hæretici in plures ecclesias lacerant; quæ juxta Apocalypsin Johannis Synagogæ magis diaboli appellandæ sunt, quàm Christi conciliabula. Hieron. *ad* Geruntiam. *pag.* 92.

* *Ecclesia non est quæ non habet sacerdotem.* Hieron. *advers. Luciferanos.* p. 491. *Ecclesia est grex Episcopo adunitus.* Cyprian. *ad* Rogatianum. *Epist.* 69.

in

in the assemblies of the Quakers, but of others also, by what name soever they may be called, that separate from our Churches. I know it to be so in divers places. 2. Those of them that were ordained, are (as to the execution of their Ministry committed to them in their Ordination during the time of their *Nonconformity)* under a legal suspension by the highest and fullest Power and Authority of this Nation, to which we are all bound in Conscience to be in Subjection. 3. Suppose that neither of the former were true, yet they are not true and lawfull Pastors of those that flock after them, seeing they have not the Pastoral cure and care of the Souls of any of them committed to their charge by any that, under God, have Authority in the Church, but are commanded to contain themselves in quietness and silence. And that they have no true and lawfull Flocks in their Congregations, appears in this, that their Assemblies and Congregations consist altogether of wandring Sheep that are gone astray from their own lawfull Pastors, and sinfully separated from the Congregations and Flocks, to which, of right, they belong, and gathered together into a Schismatical and separate meeting and Society, and so make up a Congregation of evil doers, and Synagogue of Satan. If this were rightly and seriously considered, I think it would startle the minds

minds and shake the confidence of many of them, who bless themselves in their new-found way of Religion and Worship, boast of their number, and *compass Sea and Land to make Proselytes*, that at least, they might be equally *the Children of Hell with themselves*.

If they say our Church is corrupt, we have that amongst us that we should not have, or, not that which we ought to have, I say then,

First, Suppose it be so, (which I think will yet require more pains than have yet been bestowed, to prove) yet let them consider what *Peter Martyr* judiciously saith. *Non ob quamcunq; maculam Christi Ecclesiam ita Excidere, ut Dei non amplius appelletur* *. Every little blemish in the face of a Church, cannot cast her off from being God's. The Church in *Canticles* is said to be *fair as the Moon* †; which in the *Hebrew* Tongue is called לְבָנָה *Lebanah* ‡, for her whiteness and bright shining: And yet the Moon is not so white, but still some spots remain therein, and even uncapable of illumination from the Sun. *Cælum ipsum nulla serenitas tam colata purgat, ut non alicujus nubeculæ flocculo resignetur* §. In the clearest Heaven some

* Pet. Mart. *loc. com. clus.* 4. c. 1. s. 1.
† Cant. vi. 10. ‡ Es. xxiv. 23.
§ Tertul. *li* 1. *cap.* 5. *Cont. Nation.*

specled

specled Clouds may be discerned. *Cum tota dicat Ecclesia quam diu hic est, dimitte nobis debita nostra, non utiq; hic est sine macula & ruga*:* So long as the whole Church is commanded to say, whilst she is in this World, *forgive us our trespasses,* she cannot be imagined to be altogether without spot or wrinkle. Rather they discover themselves to be most stained, to whom every small spot in the Church seems to be altogether intolerable. *Cum sub specie studii perfectionis, imperfectionem nullam tolerare possumus, aut in corpore, aut in membris Ecclesiæ, tum diabolum nos tumefacere superbiâ & hypocrisi seducere moneamur* †. When under colour of perfection, ye can endure no imperfection either in the body or members of the Church; you must be admonished that this your separation is caused by the Devil, who puffs you up with pride, and seduceth you by Hypocrisie.

Secondly, We may not upon every slight ground (to please a fond humour) leave the Society of God's People in the Church, *forsake the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is,* or goe off from Communion with that Church whereof we are, or ought to be Members. When an Ulcer breaks out in any part of the body (suppose the hand or the foot)

* Aug. *retract. l.* 1. † Calv. *adver. Anabapt. art.* 2.

must

must that member presently be cut off, or not rather be cured and healed by the use of plasters and other wholsome medicines, or the pain and evil be endured with patience untill nature hath tryed her skill, and (as it will in short time) conquered the malignity of the Distemper? And shall we then presently make use of the knife, as soon as ever there ariseth some diversity of opinions in the Church, especially in matters that are circumstantial in Religion? This were not Chirurgery, but Butchery. Nay, suppose the very substance and body of Religion were corrupted, and not onely some light errours in circumstances were maintained, but there were Heresie in Doctrine also, in this case we ought to be very tender of making a *Schism*, and look well to our selves with what mind and affection we doe it. Suppose a Malefactor be really guilty, and hath deserved to dye, yet if the Judge condemn him out of cruelty of mind, envy, or spleen, and not out of true love to justice and hatred of his sin, though the Sentence were for the matter of it never so just, yet he were most unjust in pronouncing of it: so a separation from a Church though for just causes, yet would be most unjust and sinfull, if it be done out of malice or any evil respect or affection whatsoever. In such a case, that is required of a Christian, which is required of a Chirurgeon,

who

who when necessity forceth him to cut off a member, yet he doeth it unwillingly, with grief, and after trial of all lawfull ways and means to stop the evil, and to prevent the mutilation of the Patient. The property of true Christian Charity, is, *it rejoyceth not in iniquity, but in the truth* *. That is iniquity which is so diametrically opposite to Charity, which the *Greeks* call ἐπιχαιρεκακία, which is a vice that makes men not onely to rejoice in the Calamity of others, but greedily to suck in all evil reports of them, and rejoice if they are true. Christian Charity, where it is, works the same mind and affection in us towards our neighbours, as is in Parents towards their Children, who with joy admit of their commendation, but will not so easily believe any thing that tends to their disparagement, unless they either see it with their eyes, or have good proof made for it; and then, not without grief of heart. Faults in a Church call for our lamentation, not separation; should God separate from a Christian Soul, because there is still some corruption of sinfull nature remaining in it, the condition of us all would be most miserable to Eternity. Did *Christ* separate from the Church of the *Jews*, and not hold Communion with her, because she was not

* 1 Cor. xiii. 6.

what

what she had, or ought to have been? What the state of the Jewish Church in our Saviour *Christ*'s time was, the Scriptures do abundantly shew. In it was a very corrupt Ministry, *blind leaders of the blind**. They preach'd well enough; but did not live accordingly. The High-Priests Office, which by God's Ordinance was to last during Life, was now become annual, and basely bought and sold for money †. The People were wicked, impenitent, haters and persecutors of the Son of God. Their Doctrine was much corrupted and blended with false and *Pharisaical glosses* ‡. Many superstitious Ceremonies were used, and urged more strictly than any of God's Commandments §. Church-discipline very much perverted; *The* Jews *had agreed that if any did profess* Christ, *he should be excommunicated* ‖. An horrible abuse was crept into the place of God's Service: A *Market*, and *Money-changing* ¶ set up in the *Temple of God*. And yet for all this our Saviour made no separation from this corrupt Church, but communicated with them in all parts of Divine Worship. In his Infancy he was admitted a Member of that

* Mat. xv. 14. xxiii. 16. † Joh. xi. 49.
‡ Mat. v. 20, 48. § Mar. vii. 9.
‖ Joh. ix. 22. ¶ Mat. xxi. 12. Joh. ii. 14.

Church

Church by *Circumcision* *. At the *Purification* he was presented before the Lord in that Church, and a *Sacrifice offered for him according to the Law of* Moses †. When he came to riper years he constantly kept the Church, came to the Congregation to Divine Service ‡, publick Prayers, and reading the Scriptures. He received the Sacraments in their Church. *Baptism* §, and the *Passover* ‖. Yea his Conformity to the *Jewish* Church was not onely in Divine Institutions, but in Humane also; as in his observation of the Feast of the *Dedication* of the Temple (mentioned *Joh.* x.) doth appear. He was so far from breaking the order or custome of that Church, as that he conformed to it in those things that were contrary to Divine Institutions. It was the ordinance of God that the *Passover* should be eaten by the *Jews with their loyns girded, their shooes on their feet, and their staves in their hands because they were to eat it in haste* ¶. Standing was a posture of readiness for travell; and they used long Garments in those Countries, which would have been an hindrance to them, if they had not been trussed up. The Apostle seems to allude to this cus-

* Luk. ii. 21. † Ib. ii. 22, 23.
‡ Luk. ii. 46. iii. 21. iv. 16. § Ib. iii. 21.
‖ Joh. ii. 13. ¶ Exod. xii. 11.

tome, when he saith, *stand therefore having your loyns girded about* *. But because the Church of the *Jews*, being now safely escaped out of *Egypt*, had by long custome omitted and altered these Ceremonies, therefore our Saviour *Christ* would not break or alter the custome of that Church, but did as they did. He did not *stand* at the *Passover*, but *sate* or used a leaning posture (for so the word ἀναχεῖσθαι, used by St. *Matthew* doth signifie) as appears by the Evangelist. *When the even was come he sate down with the twelve* †. And all this to teach us that we ought to be tender of violating the *customes* of the *Church* ‡; not to grow into a prophane contempt or neglect of any part of publick worship, for every imperfection and blemish, nor to separate from a Church, though never so corrupt, so long as the Word, Sacraments, and Doctrine of Salvation may there be enjoyed.

Corruptions of a Church are commonly by Divines distinguished into two sorts. They are either such as concern the matter of Religion, which the Apostle calls *damnable Heresies* §, in fundamental points of Faith and Holiness, which tend to the destroying of the very being of a Church. Or else such as concern the manner

* Eph. vi. 14. † Mat. xxvi. 20.
‡ 1 Cor. xi. 16. § 2 Pet. ii. 2.

For (say they) "the learned Authour before "mentioned (that is *Camero)* tells us that cor- "ruption in manners crept into a Church, is "not a sufficient cause of separation from it. "This he proves from *Matt.* xxiii. 2, 3. And "he also gives this reason for it: Because in "what Church soever there is purity of Doc- "trine, there God hath his Church, though "overwhelmed with scandals. And therefore "*whosoever separateth from such an Assembly,* "*separateth from that place where God hath his* "*Church, which is rash and unwarrantable.* And "in the next Page, they say: He that will "never communicate with any Church, till "every thing that offendeth be removed out of "it, must tarry till the great day of Judgment, "when (and not till then) *Christ* will send "forth his Angels and gather out of his King- "dom every thing that offendeth, and them "that doe iniquity *." And though to excuse themselves from the guilt of Schism, they that do separate, may pretend, that they make not an open breach of Christian Love, wherein the nature of that great sin doth consist. Let their own words answer themselves. "We grant that "to make up the formality of a *Schismatick,* "there must be added *uncharitableness,* as to

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt. p.* 116, 117.

"make

"make up the formality of an *Heretick* there "must be added *obstinacy:* But yet, as he that "denieth a fundamental Article of Faith, is "guilty of *Heresie* though he add not *obstinacy* "thereunto to make him an *Heretick;* so he "that doth *unwarrantably separate* from a true "Church, is truly guilty of *Schism*, though he "add not *uncharitableness* thereunto, to deno- "minate him a complete *Schismatick* *." How unjustifiable then is the separation, which some make themselves and cause others to make, in these days from our Churches, which in their Constitution, for *Doctrine, Discipline* and *Worship* are the envy of *Rome*, and the admiration of the rest of the Christian World: where there is nothing Idolatrous in *Worship*, nothing Heretical in *Doctrine*, nor Antiscriptural in *Discipline;* where there is nothing taught, believed, or done, but what is agreeable with the word of God, or not contrary thereunto: And (to speak in the words of the learned and godly Dr. *Henry More)* a "Church so throughly purged from "whatsoever can properly be styled Antichris- "tian, and is, I am confident, so Apostolical, "that the Apostles themselves, if they were "alive again, would not have the least scruple "of joyning in publick worship with us in our

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt. p.* 118.

"common

"common Assemblies*." Separation from it, can be no less than the fruit of Pride or bitter Zeal, which tends to strife, *And where envy and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work* †.

I have heard some Church-forsakers, when they have been told of their Apostasie and falling off from the Church whereof they were Members, excuse and please themselves in this, that they are not Apostates from the Faith, they hold the same Doctrine, and believe the same Creed we do. Though in that they doe no more than Papists doe.

But in the mean time they consider not, That,

1. This is an improvement and aggravation of their sin, (so far is it from excusing the fault) to depart from a Church wherein they were born and baptized, and which (by their own confession) continues sound in the Faith. Separation is allowed by no Divines (no not by the *Presbyterians* ‡ themselves) but either in case of *cruel Persecution, damnable Heresie,* or *downright Idolatry.* They then that separate from a Church where there is neither of these, have the greater sin.

* *Inquiry into the mystery of iniquity. p.* 561.

† Jam. iii. 16.

‡ Dr. Manton *on* Jude 12. *p.* 496.

2. That

2. That the hainousness of the sin of *Schism* doth not consist in renouncing the Faith, but in the breach of Christian Charity, without which *all Faith is nothing* *. A man may be very Orthodox in his Judgment, and yet be a damnable *Schismatick* if he break that Union which ought to be religiously kept amongst Christians, in God's worship especially. And because this breach is manifestly perfected in refusing due Ecclesiastical Communion together, therefore that separation is κατ' ἐξοχὴν, called *Schism.*

3. That the breach of the bond of Charity is equally as dangerous and damnable, as Apostasie from the Faith; and as destructive and inconsistent to the nature and being of the Church one as the other.

4. What sufficient convincing proof can our Church-forsakers make, that they are not faln from the true Faith, as well as from Christian Charity, seeing they are subdivided into so many severall Parties and Sects, some whereof (and not the smallest number, *viz.* the *Quakers*) are totally apostatized from all Christianity; others are faln in part, as the *Anabaptists*, *Antinomians*, &c. And those of them that do now and then come to Church (perhaps because they

* 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

cannot

cannot tell how to dispose of themselves otherwise) studiously absent themselves from the profession of our Faith contained in the Creeds; and if any of them chance to be there at that time, yet they willfully refuse to observe and obey that godly and laudable command and custome of the Church, grounded on good authority of God's word, *to stand up to their Belief.*

5. If they are not yet quite faln from the Faith, yet their *Schism* and departure from the Church, is a fair step towards it*; where are they likely to stay (unless God marvellously stop them) who are departed from his house? The Prodigal Son's leaving his Father's Family was the first step to all that lewd course of Life that afterwards he took. The *Donatists* of old, did not at first dissent in matters of Faith from the *Catholick* Church, but their *Schism* did soon produce *Heresie*; as an Ulcer or Wound being inflamed doth soon beget a Fever. In the mean time whatever they esteem themselves, or are esteemed of others to be, they are indeed no more true Members of the Church, than Tares or Chaff are part of the Wheat, or than Mutineers are part of an Army. *Hæretici & Schis-*

* *Omne Schisma, ubi progressu temporis inveteratum fuerit, Hæresin aliquam sibi confingit, ut recte ab Ecclesia recessisse videatur.* Mason *vindic. ministerii Anglic. p.* 163.

matici

matici non sunt ex vera Ecclesia, sed tantummodo Ecclesiæ immisti, sicut & excrementa sunt quidem in corpore, sed non de corpore. Alsted. *Lexic. Theol.* p. 359 *.

Now whilst I write these things, I weep: *mine eye, mine eye, runneth down with water;* I cannot refrain my self but must cry out, alas, alas, for my dear mother the poor distressed, distracted, and divided Church of *England;* I will bewail thee with the weeping of *Jazer, I will water thee with my tears, my bowels shall sound like a harp for thee, and my inward parts like pipes* †. That thine own Children, like *Jacob* and *Esau*, should so jar and disagree in their Womb, as to endanger the very life of her that bore them, by their strugling. What, Brethren, have we not all one God, one *Christ*, one Spirit, one Baptism, one Scripture, one hope of Eternal Salvation? And can we not close and communicate together in the Worship and Service, of that one blessed Creator, mercifull Saviour, and most sweet Comforter? Are our differences about I know not what, grown to such an height, that we cannot *goe to Church* together, joyn in one

* Camero. *tract. in quo eccl. Rom. pre. ad exam. c.* 14.

† *Quæ gens, quæ regio tulit tam multa dictu gravia, perpessu aspera quam hodie nos? Non enim partes solum inter nos sunt, sed partium (ô patria quæ salus te servet?) novæ partes.* Just. Lipsius. *de constant. l.* 2. *c.* 20.

confession

confession of Sin, profession of Faith, Prayer, each with, and for other, hear the same Scriptures read and preached, and sit together at the same Table, partake of that same heavenly Feast, to which we are altogether most lovingly invited*?

So great is the crime of our present Age in this, that Posterity shall never be able to add to it. *Oh tell it not in* Gath, *publish it not in the Streets of* Ashcalon, *lest the Daughters of the Philistines rejoyce, lest the Daughters of the uncircumcised triumph.* What will very *Pagans* say, when they shall see Christians thus divided? As *Clemens Alexandrinus* brings in the Heathen exprobrating our Religion for untrue, *Quia omnis secta Christianismi titulum sibi vendicat, tamen alia aliam execratur et condemnat* †; because every Sect challengeth to it self the Title of true Christianity, yet one curseth and condemneth another. What can they otherwise think, but that the God and *Christ* whom we all pretend to serve, is (what he abhors to be) the authour of confusion? Oh what Musick is this in the Ears of *Papists* to hear of our discords? Did *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate* agree as friends to crucifie *Christ*, and shall Christians that profess

* *Dij talia Graiis, erroremq; hostibus illum.*

† Clem. Alex. *Strom. l.* 7.

themselves

themselves to be his Members, disagree as mortal Enemies, about their Service of him? Oh *Religion, Religion!* Hast thou not Enemies enough abroad in the World, that seek thy destruction, but thy *deadliest wound must be received in the house of thy friend!* Like *Joseph* thou art basely sold by thine own Brethren, when thou art bringing them necessary food: like *Sampson*, thou art betray'd into the hands of the *Philistines* by those that pretend zeal for thee; and like thy blessed Master, thou art delivered up to thy mortal Foes by thine own treacherous Disciples: what Ocean can furnish mine eyes with tears enough to pour out, for the scandal and matter of rejoycing, that these things do give to thine adversaries; and for thy much feared ruine that this portends! Alas, Alas, that those who pretend much tenderness in lesser matters, should make no Conscience at all of endeavouring thy Preservation and Prosperity, by *keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace!* What shall I say of those Men, but as our Saviour of his Enemies, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they doe.* The Lord open their eyes that they may see, and *perswade* Japhet *to dwell in the Tents of* Shem.

Oh all ye my Brethren, that make an unchristian separation from the Society of your Christian Friends and Neighbours in the publick worship

worship of God, especially you, to whom I stand nearest related, I beseech you in the bowels of our common Saviour, do not thus give advantage to the adversaries of our Religion, to endeavour and hope for the speedy overthrow both of us and it; and in the mean time to laugh in their sleeves at our divisions, saying, *there, there, so would we have it. I beseech you, Brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no Schisms amongst you, that ye be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment**. *If there be any Consolation in* Christ, *if any comfort of Love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if there be any bowels of Mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves*†.

It is promised as a blessed Fruit of the Gospel, *the envy of* Ephraim *shall cease*‡, *and the adversaries of* Judah *shall be cut off;* Ephraim *shall not envy* Judah, *and* Judah *shall not vex* Ephraim; *but they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines, toward the* West, *they shall spoil*

* 1 Cor. i. 10. † Phil. ii. 1, 3.
‡ Es. xi. 13, 14.

them

them of the East *together, they shall lay their hands upon* Edom *and* Moab, *and the Children of* Ammon *shall obey them.* Oh that all animosity and prejudice were banished from the borders of our hearts, that so meeting together by Troops (with primitive Concord *) in the publick places of our Assemblies, being banded together with a kind of holy Violence, we may with one mind and one mouth, lay Siege to the throne of Grace, and give God no rest (such Forces are to him most acceptable) till he fulfill this gracious promise, that we perish not in our divisions.

Lord grant that all they that confess thy holy name, may agree in the truth of thy holy word, and live in unity and godly love through Jesus Christ. Amen.

* *Coimus in cœtum & congregationem, ut ad Deum quasi manu factâ precationibus ambiamus orantes.* Tertul. *Apol. c.* 39.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT IV.

THAT cannot be the Ordinance of God, conducing to the Salvation of Souls, which is not onely contrary to good and wholsome Laws; destructive to Gospel-Order; and destitute of Divine Promise; but is also contrary to Gospel-commands. For God is not contradictory to himself, instituting or ordaining that in one place of his word, which he forbids in another; but throughout the whole Scripture he reveals one constant, and one uninterrupted Tenor of sacred truth.

But the practice in question is contrary to sundry Gospel-commands; as will easily be made out by instancing in two or three, instead of others.

The first I shall mention is that in St. *Peter. Let none of you suffer as a Murtherer, or as a Thief, or as an evil doer, or as a busie-body in other Mens Matters**. The word in the Original is ἀλλοτριοεπίσκοπος, which in the proper and genuine construction of it, signifies a busie

* 1 Pet. iv. 15.

Bishop

Bishop in another Man's Diocess *; or a busie Presbyter in another Man's Parish, that takes upon him to meddle in another Man's Cure, and to be doing in matters that are committed to another Man's Charge; that is so well at leisure, and hath so little to doe of his own, that (according to the Proverb) *He thrusts his Sickle into another Man's Harvest.*

The Apostle reckons such a one among *Murtherers* and *Thieves*, and other *evil doers*, that so he may easily be known what he is, by such as the Holy Ghost sorts with him. Now *Murtherers* and *Thieves* and other *Malefactors* are made the Companions of such, who without a special concession, or commission, undertake to meddle in other Mens Parishes, with the Souls not committed to their Care and Charge; and the Apostle gives equal Caveat against them all.

I know not therefore how such busie-bodies can acquit themselves of the other two sins also mentioned in this black roll. Of the latter, their guilt seems to be too evident, in taking up wandring *Sheep* from their Folds, when they ought rather to send them home to their own *Shepherds:* in setting their *mark* upon them, owning them for *theirs*, and calling them by the

* *Alienorum inspector, sive curator. Composita vox ab alieno & Episcopo.* Erasm. *in loc.*

name

name of *their Church*, when as in truth they have no more Property or Interest in them, than the Emperour of *Utopia* hath in the *Pleiades:* or the poor *Athenian*, in *Horace*, had in the Ships which he saw on the Sea, and called his own, though he had no other right to them, than what his extravagant and distempered fancy did create. For what warrant have they to meddle with other Mens Flocks?

Of the former, (I fear also) they will scarce be found altogether guiltless. For truly the Souls of their Proselytes, after they have been their followers a while, seem to be so mortally poisoned with *Schism* and *Separation*, *profane contempt* and *neglect* of the *publick worship* and *ordinances* of God, with *despising* of all *Authority*, good *Laws*, and *Government*, and many other dangerous evils; and so *metamorphosed*, that from being *Sheep* (as before they seemed to be) they turn *Wolves*, and are ready to worry their own *Shepherds:* as is found true by too sad experience in all places where these men intrude themselves.

The Apostle doth elsewhere reckon up *idleness*, as another Companion of this sin. *They learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house, and are busie-bodies**. Again, *Working not at*

* 1 Tim. v. 13.

all,

*all, but are busie-bodies**. And indeed this is the Root from whence this vice springs. 'Tis true (in the former place) the Apostle makes it *muliebre vitium*, the womens sin; but it is no wonder to see idlers of the other Sex also, to become effeminate, and meddlers in other folks matters, when they have none of their own to be doing about. An idler is well at leisure, and if he will not serve God in his own station, rather than he shall doe nothing, Satan will find him employment, in setting him to thrust his Sickle into his Neighbours Corn. *They made me keeper of the Vineyards, but mine own Vineyard have I not kept*†. Here are *Vineyards* opposed to *her own Vineyard;* false Churches, to true. For *The Vineyard of the Lord of Hoast, is the house of* Israel, *and the men of* Judah *his pleasant Plant*‡. When men keep not their *own Vineyard*, the keeping whereof is committed to them of God, *the Spirit that works in the Children of disobedience*, will set them to plant and keep Vineyards of his, *The Vine whereof is the Vine of* Sodom, *and of the Fields of* Gomorrah; *their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, their clusters are bitter*§. What account these *Husbandmen* will make hereafter, to him that is the Lord of

* 2 Thess. iii. 11. † Cant. i. 6.
‡ Es. v. 7. § Deut. xxxii. 32, 33.

the Vineyard, for such kind of dealing, I wish they may in time seriously consider, e'er it be too late so to doe.

Neither may we omit to observe how the Apostle in the afore quoted place, doth (as it were) unchristian such a busie Person, and seems to make him no better than a *Pagan* or Infidel. For he puts a vast difference betwixt the sufferings of a *busie Presbyter*, and those of a *Christian*. *If a Christian suffer, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this behalf* *. But if such a *busie-body* suffer (as 'tis as much pity he should goe scotfree as any of his Mates in the Text) he hath as great cause to be ashamed as a *Thief* or a *Murtherer*.

The Second Gospel-command I shall instance in, is that of St. *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*. *Study to be quiet, and doe your own business* †. Quietness is here enjoyned under the notion and quality of an Art or Science; for we are commanded to study it, φιλοτιμεῖσθαι ἡσυχάζειν ‡, seek with an holy ambition, thinking it an honour to live in peace. The quietness there commended to our ambitious endeavour, I conceive, to im-

* 1 Pet. iv. 15, 16. † 1 Thes. iv. 11.

‡ *Proprie est honoris consequendi gratia anniti.* Piscat. *in loc.*

port,

port, not a quietness from motion, but from commotion or troubling of others; a contented calm conversation, opposite to tumultuous turbulence, and restless intermedling with things wherein others are concerned. But how shall we attain to be masters of this Art of quietness? The means most available that way, the Apostle prescribes in the next words, τὰ ἴδια πράτ̃ειν, to doe our own business, letting other mens matters alone to themselves. For a man then not to content himself with his own affairs, but to mix himself with other mens; and without any lawfull appointment or allowance, to thrust himself into another's Place and Employment, is contrary to that quietness which Christians are to study, a manifest breach of this great Gospel-command, and consequently inconsistent with the ordinance of God.

A Third Evangelical precept, is that of our blessed Saviour. *Whatsoever ye would that men should doe unto you, doe ye even so to them* *. It is a principle both † natural and divine, enjoyned by our heavenly Law-giver, as a ground and rule of all equity amongst men. *Lactantius*

* Mat. vii. 12.

† *Sic cum unoquoq; agas tanquam tu illius indueris personam, ille tuam.* Hierocles *apud* Stobæum. *Serm.* 84.

thus comments on it: *Radix & omnis fundamentum æquitatis est illud: vide ut ne facias ulli quod pati nolis, sed alterius animum de tuo metieris* This is the root and foundation of all equity, for a man to be carefull not to doe that to another, which he would not suffer himself; but to measure another man's mind by his own.

Now I appeal to the hearts and consciences of those Ministers, that thrust themselves now into other mens Congregations and Parishes, and there in private houses gather together a company of disciples and followers of the more giddy and unstable sort of People, (for such they are for the most part, that not content with the publick labours of their own Pastors, flock to private Conventicles) and set up a course of Preaching and other Ministerial Acts: whether, if they were Pastors of Congregations (as sometimes they were) and had a charge of a flock of God's People committed to them (for whose Souls they and none else, must be accountable) they would take it well, or permit it (if they could otherwise help it) that a stranger should thrust himself into their Parishes, and lead away a number of their People to private Assemblies in corners, to a dependence on them for teaching, and other duties, which they obtrude upon them as the worship and service of God, even

to

to the forsaking and loathing of that, which is publickly established, for waiting on them in private? And whether, when those men were in their Pastoral charges, and in the late time, *Anabaptists*, *Familists*, and other *Sectaries*, did the like, as they themselves now doe, (set up private Conventicles in several Towns and Parishes) they did not account themselves much injured thereby, and made their Pulpits sound loud against it, nay, oppose it by all means they possibly could? Which is a truth sufficiently known to all that have been hearers of them, or know their practices.

Neither will it suffice them to say, those whom they then opposed were Persons heterodox in their judgments, and corrupt in their opinions. For,

1. So may these House-creeping Preachers be also, for ought any one knows *. If it be sound Divinity they Preach, it is avowable, and publication is a fair Argument of truth. Truth seeks no corners: it is onely ashamed to be hidden; as the Sun to be clouded or eclipsed. The desire of Secresie and Privacy renders their Doc-

* *Quicunq; malis vitam maculaverit actis,*
Ad tenebras pavidus refugit, ne lumine claro
Sordida pollutæ pateant contagia mentis. Juven. *l.* 2.

trines

trines suspicious of falshood and errour. In the dark, gross faults are not perceived; and they are evil-doers onely that are said by our Saviour *to hate the light* *. While men doe nothing but well, they need not conceal and hide their doings. "The very Heathen (as a Divine of ours "observes) did worship their gods *sub dio*, with- "out Roofs or Coverings in a free openness †; "and where they could, in Temples made with "Specular Stone, that was transparent as Cristal, "so as that they that walked without in the "Streets, might see all that was done within. "And even nature it self taught the natural "man, to make that an Argument of a man "truly Religious, *aperto vivere voto;* that he "durst pray aloud, and let the world hear what "he asked at God's hands, which duty (saith "he) is best performed when we joyn with the "Congregation in publick Prayers. St. *Austin* "hath made that note upon the *Donatists* that "they were clanculary, clandestine Divines, "Divines in corners. And in *Photius* we have "such a note almost upon all Hereticks; as the "*Nestorian* was called *Coluber*, a Snake, be-

* 1 Joh. iii. 20.

† *Dr.* Don. *Honesta semper publico gaudent, scelera secreta sunt. Cur nunquam palam loqui, nunquam libere congregari sustinent, nisi illud quod colunt, aut puniendum est aut pudendum.*

"cause

"cause though he kept in the Garden, in the "Church, he lurked and lay hid to doe mis-"chief." And truly so long as the Preaching of the Gospel is not persecuted, and there is no prohibition to the contrary, as (sometimes there was*) it seems to me to be contrary to the very nature of it (herein differing from the Law,) that it is not confined to any one Nation or Place; nor is subject to (*bonds* or *restraint* †) to be shut up in private houses, and taught in secret, and not rather to be published in Churches and open Places of free and common resort. The command to the Apostles was, *Go stand and speak in the Temple to the People all the words of this Life* ‡. And accordingly was their Practice, *Act.* ix. 20. *Ib.* xiii. 14, 44. 'Tis true the godly in times past, had their private Meetings, in *Deserts, Mountains, Dens,* and *Caves* of the *Earth.* But the case is not alike with us, as with them. The times then were of most bloudy Persecution, when neither Preacher nor Professour escaped the Fire; and therefore were enforced to conceal themselves, and privately to enjoy those Comforts, and discharge those Duties and Exercises of Religion, which they could not publickly be suffered to doe. But those who

* 2 Chron. xxviii. 24. Act. xv. 6.
† 2 Tim. ii. 9. ‡ Act. v. 20.

set

set up and frequent private Meetings now, may enjoy the preaching and reading of the Word, prayers to God, confession of Sin, profession of Faith, and benefit of the Sacraments, in the publick Assemblies of the Saints: Yea, they are not onely allowed, but commanded by Authority so to doe, but they will not. Those Teachers then that in these *Halcion* days of the Gospel creep into corners to vent their Doctrines, discover themselves to be, either,

First, Seditious and Schismatical, seeking to make Parties and Divisions in the Church. Or,

Secondly, Proud and Arrogant, preferring their own Opinions and Doctrines, Assemblies and Persons, before all other. Or,

Thirdly, False and Erroneous; for all *damnable Heresies*, and Doctrines of Perdition, which pervert and destroy Souls, are thus brought in underhand *privily*, by such as *creep* into the Church of God by stealth *. At least, they are destitute of that means of justification and defence of the truth, which our Saviour *Christ* had, and which all *Christ*'s Ministers in a setled Church ought to have, *viz.* to *appeal to the publick Audience*. That which is publickly Preached, may be proved and tryed, but not so well that which is taught in obscurity †.

* 2 Pet. ii. 1. † Joh. xviii. 21.

2. What

2. What the Judgments and Opinions of these Men have been, and that in all those things wherein the Peace of the Church, and the Salvation of Souls of Christians are concerned, I mean the *Doctrine*, *Discipline*, and *Worship*, as it stands established in the *Church of England*, the World hath had sufficient knowledge and experience, by the late bloudy Wars and Persecutions raised thereabout.

3. Lastly, The question is not (as hath been said) *de facto*, what Doctrine these men deliver in their private Conventions, but *de jure*, what right they have to Preach any, in other Mens Parishes, as they doe.

Such a Person then, whosoever he be, that doeth that to others, which he would not have done to himself, nay, which he hath opposed and disliked in others, is (as the Apostle calls him) αὐτοκατάκριτος, *condemned of himself* *, as sinning wittingly, and wilfully spurning against a known truth sparkling and shining in his Conscience. The waiting on such Mens Ministry is so far from being the Ordinance of God, that he commands all men to avoid them †.

* Tit. iii, 11. † Ib. 10.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT V.

THAT cannot be the Ordinance of God for the working of Grace, that hath no Scripture President, or warrantable Example, to ground it on. For all the Ordinances of God, of this kind, besides his Mandate, have also their exemplification in Scripture, God (ordinarily) working Grace in the hearts of Men, then, as he doth now.

But this private and house-preaching, by an intruder, in a constituted Church, where there is a Preaching Minister established, hath none.

I deny not, but it may be lawfull in some Cases, to have all the parts of God's Worship used in a private House. As,

1. In case of infirmity of Body, when People are not able to come to Church. Ecclesiastical History tells us, that in the primitive times, divers of the new converted Christians were Baptized, some in Prison; as appears in the story of *Basilides* in *Eusebius* *. And the sick in their beds; as *Cyprian* † declares at large. And if any were hindred by Sickness that they

* *L.* vi. *c.* 5. † *Epist. ad* Magnum.

could not partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper with the Church, it was sent home to them by a Priest or Deacon, if it might be; if not by some other. As appears by the example of *Serapion*, in an Epistle of *Dionysius* Bishop of *Alexandria*, to *Fabius* *.

2. In time of Persecution, when the doors of God's House are shut up against us, so as that we cannot have free access to it, or liberty to joyn together with the Congregation in Prayers, hearing the Word, and receiving the Sacraments; as it was in the days of King *Ahaz* †. Thus *Victor* reports that in the Persecution by the *Vandals*, the Congregations of Christians in *Africa*, being through the vastations of War deprived of their Churches, did hold their Assemblings together for Divine Worship, wherever they could. And the same Authour tells us, that because of the rage of the *Arian* Hereticks, the Orthodox Christians had their Meetings in private Houses. Or in such other like Cases of special necessity.

Yet our Saviour *Christ* in the *Jewish* Church, as, before he was a Preacher, his custome was to frequent the publick Assembly in the *Synagogue every Sabbath-day* ‡; so, after he set upon

* Euseb. *l.* vi. *c.* 44. † 2 Chron. xxviii. 24.
‡ Luk. iv. 16.

the

the execution of that Function, he never used to Preach privately in Houses. Hear what he saith himself, when the High-Priest asked him of his Disciples and Doctrine, *Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the World: I ever taught in the Synagogue and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing* *. His words are plain; yet because with some Men, Fancy and Affection do prevail over their Judgments and Reason (according to that saying of St. *Austin, periit siquidem judicium, postquam res transiit in affectum; & nostram qualemcunq; quia nostra jam facta est, prævalere volumus sententiam* †.) Therefore I shall endeavour to clear the truth of our Saviour's Speech in that saying of his to the High-Priest; and shew, that he was always a publick orderly Preacher, and never a private irregular *Conventicler.* And though the contrary could be proved, yet it would make nothing for the irregular Practice of some in this Age whom I am disputing against, seeing the question is of such Persons onely, as have an *ordinary* calling to the Ministry (whereas our Saviour *Christ*'s was *extraordinary)* in a setled Gospel-Church (whereas the *Jewish*-Church was in *Christ*'s time expiring, and the Gospel-

* Joh. xviii. 19, 20. Matt. xxvi. 55.

† Aug. *cont.* Julian. *l.* 1.

Church

Church beginning,) and are intruders into other Mens Charges and Congregations, as our Saviour neither was, nor could be, seeing he was the supreme Lord of his Church, and *Heir of all things.*

In those words of his, First (saith he) I spake παῤῥησίᾳ, openly. The word properly signifies freedom and liberty of Speech; which *Piscator* thus explains, *Cum quis omne id dicit quod ad rem pertinet, nihil veritus offensionem eorum, quibuscum loquitur* *. When a Man speaks that which properly pertains to the matter in hand, not fearing though it offend those to whom he speaks. Oftentimes in Scripture it signifies, *openly.* And in this place *Tremelius* renders it by *apertè,* and *Beza* by *palam;* both *openly.* So that our Saviour professeth here, that his Doctrine, as it was heavenly truth, and delivered without fear of danger, or hatred of Men, or persecution of the World; so not in a Corner or *Conventicle,* but *openly* and in publick.

Secondly, *I spake* (saith he) not to a few Select Persons, to a gathered Church, but τῷ κόσμῳ, to the World, *i. e.* To all sorts of Men in the World, without any difference or distinction, either of Nation, Place or State, even to as many as would come to hear me. Though in-

* Piscat. *in* 1 Thes. ii. 2.

deed

deed for the most part he Preach'd in *Judæa* and *Galilee* (whence he was called *a Minister of the Circumcision* *) and saith, *that he was not sent, save unto the lost Sheep of the house of Israel* †: yet doubtless sometimes he Preached to a promiscuous Company both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, without making any difference, *Matt.* xv. 21.

Thirdly, *I taught*, saith he, *in the Synagogue.* There was one onely *Temple* among the *Jews*, and that was at *Jerusalem:* but as in other Cities and Towns of the *Jews*, so also in the Metropolitan City, besides the *Temple*, there were *Synagogues;* which were publick places appointed for Prayers, Sermons, Reading, and exposition of the Law and the Prophets to the People. And in the *Synagogues* at *Jerusalem*, and other Towns and Cities, *Christ* did most frequently and constantly Preach, as the Scriptures do abundantly testifie, *Matt.* iv. 23. *Ib.* xiii. 58, 54. *Ib.* xxi. 23. *Ib.* ix. 35. *Ib.* xii. 9. *Mark* i. 21. *Ib.* vi. 2. *Luk.* iv. 16, 21, *and* 44. *Ib.* vi. 6. *Joh.* vi. 59, &c.

Fourthly, He saith, I not onely taught in the *Synagogues*, but in the *Temple*, the most solemn and publick Place. The *Temple* at *Jerusalem* was the place where the Priests did offer daily Sacrifices, and taught the People; to which,

* Rom. xv. 8. † Mat. xv. 24.

thrice

thrice in the year, all the Males, from all the Coasts of *Judæa*, were to resort. In this *Temple* did our Saviour *Christ* very frequently Preach, *Matt.* xxi. 23. *Luk.* xix. 47, &c.

Fifthly, *I taught*, saith he, *where the Jews always resort*; where there was a full and free Concourse of all the Nation of the *Jews*, and many *Gentiles* also, from all Parts and Quarters of *Judæa*.

Lastly, And *in private*, saith he, *I have said nothing*. As if he had purposely and expresly denied himself to be, what they were apt to charge him with, a *private, seditious*, and *Schismatical Conventicler*.

'Tis true, that sometimes, through so great a resort of People to him, that neither the *Synagogue* nor *Temple* could hold them, he was fain to take a *Mountain** for his Pulpit. Sometimes being not able to stand quiet, for the throng of People that crouded him, he retreated to a *Ship*†, that he might be the better heard, and taught the People from thence. Yet all this was publickly and openly to the World.

As for Religious discourse with his Disciples, or others, in private Houses, either by way of explanation, or repetition of his publick Ser-

* Matt. iv. *ult. with* Matt. v. 1, 2.

† Luk. v. 1, 3.

mons,

mons, that we deny not, but he often used it. For we reade that when he was κατα μόνας, *alone, they that were about him with the twelve, asked him of the Parable* *. But as for substance of Doctrine, it was allways publick. He never spake privately to his Disciples, or others, but they were the same things which he Preach'd publickly. He spake not other things to them in private, than what he spake publickly, but in another manner. And therefore even to that exposition of his Doctrine, which he made privately to his Disciples, he adds, *Is a Candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? And not to be set on a Candlestick? For there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested* †; q. d. these Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven are therefore revealed unto you, not that ye should Preach them in Corners, but to the whole World.

As for that place of St. *Mark* ‡ which seems to speak of *Christ*'s Preaching in a *private House;* though it be craftily urged on ignorant People, yet if rightly understood, it cannot make ought against what hath been said. For I demand, was it a truth our Saviour Christ said, *I always taught in the Synagogues and in the*

* Mark iv. 10 † Matt. iv. 21, 22.
‡ Mark ii. 2.

Temple,

Temple, and in private I have said nothing, or was it not? To say the latter, were no less than blasphemy, and to give him the lye, who is the God of truth, *who knew no sin, neither was guile ever found in his mouth* *. If it was a truth (as it must needs, without monstrous impiety, be acknowledged to be) then *he ever taught in the Synagogues, and in the Temple, and in private he said nothing*. The occasion of it was, his being called in question for his *Doctrine;* his answer to which plainly declares, that as for substantials of Evangelical Doctrines, he ever taught them openly to the World in the Jewish *Synagogues* and *Temple*. Otherwise it would have been absurd for our Saviour to have said as he did to *Pilate* †, *Why askest thou me of my Doctrine? ask them that heard me: Behold they know what I have said.* For *Pilate* could not ask the *Jews* that were then present of any thing that he had said in private, seeing they were none of his private Companions or Followers.

If therefore there be any seeming *Antilogy* in any other Scripture, it is not so in reality, but appearance; it may seem so to our weakness, but it is not so in it self. For the Holy Ghost who is the Spirit of truth in one place, is so

* 1 Pet. ii. 20. † Joh. xviii. 12.

throughout all the Scripture, without any real contradiction to it self, any where.

Answer 1. Therefore to that place of St. *Mark* I have two things to answer. First, our English translation in that phrase *(he preached the word unto them)* doth not properly nor genuinely answer the Original Greek: which is, καὶ ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον, he spake to them; or as *Beza* renders it, *loquebatur eis sermonem*, he made a speech to them. And *Tremelius*, *loquebatur cum eis sermonem*, he talked or discoursed with them. Doubtless about Gospel-truths and Heavenly matters. When ever our Saviour Christ preach'd, or spake Sermon-wise, the Scripture useth other words to express it by, as διδάσκειν, to teach. Κηρύσσειν to preach or publish as an *Herauld*, in open place, in the hearing of a multitude: or εὐαγγελίζειν, to preach the Gospel. But as for the word here used by the Holy Ghost λαλεῖν, it is never used in Scripture properly and strictly to signifie to preach; but to speak, talk, or discourse; which differs much from preaching. For though it be true, that whosoever preacheth, speaketh; yet it is not true that whosoever speaketh, preacheth. In all Languages there have ever been held a difference betwixt speaking and preaching. *Solius sacerdotis est prædicare, loqui autem communis vulgi.* Yea it is observed

served by the most skillfull in that Language that this word λαλεῖν amongst Greek Authours, is still used for the worst kind of speaking or talking. But in the New Testament indeed, it is used in a better sense, but never properly and strictly for, *to preach;* but to speak as we do in common talk or discourse. *When the Devil speaketh a Lye he speaketh it of his own,* Joh. viii. 44. *When I was a Child, I spake as a Child.* 1 Cor. xiii. 11. *Speak the truth every man to his neighbour.* Eph. iv. 25. And in many other places we have the same word used, which were most absurd to render by the word, *preach.* So that all that can be rationally or certainly gathered from that saying of St. *Mark,* is no more but this: That our Saviour Christ seeing such a multitude of people flock about him, took an occasion to fall into a religious discourse with them, and to talk with them of divine and heavenly matters: whether it were by minding them, of what he had publickly taught, or explaining his Pulpit-doctrines to them, we need not much trouble our selves to inquire.

Answer 2. But suppose he did preach (though it was not privately, but openly enough to the World, as any one that looks into the history, as it is recorded by the Evangelists, may easily perceive) in that house, or any else (as by his Divine prerogative he might doe what he would,

and that which every private Minister is not bound to follow him in) yet how it can be made use of to countenance those, that set up a course of *house-preaching*, and that in other mens Parishes, where there are Preaching Ministers established by Law, and where they have no manner of allowance or Authority so to doe (as our Saviour Christ had) nay being forbidden by Authority (as he was not) I do not understand. As for speaking to or with the people, in that house or any other; or making use of that, or any other private meeting, either in separation from, or competition with, much less in opposition to, the publick Ordinances of God then in use (as our Conventicles now-a-days are used) that was far from our Saviour's meaning or practice, who improved that, and all meetings and occasions, in subordination and direct subserviency to the Synagogue-service and Temple-worship of the Jewish Church.

And that Christ should be a publick, and not a private house-preacher, the Scriptures did foretell long before his coming: By the Prophet *Esay. I have not spoken in secret, in the dark places of the earth**. And by *Solomon, Wisedom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, she crieth in the chief place of Concourse,*

* Es. xlv. 19.

in

*in the opening of the gates, in the City she uttereth her words**. All which was spoken of Christ, who is the Wisedom of God, *in whom are hid all the treasures of wisedom and knowledge* †. And it is observable what *Junius* notes upon those words: *She cried in the chief place of Concourse; ubicunque est maxima frequentia, sumpta locutio à concionum ritu.* The form of speech is taken from the rite, order, and approved custome of Sermons, which were ever publick. *For things are said to be preach'd, not in that they are taught, but in that they are published in open hearing of all; saith Mr.* Hooker ‡.

Thus it appears our Saviour Christ was no private Conventicler, or house-creeping Preacher. He disclaims it in himself, and disallows it in his servants, whom he forewarns not to seek him in Corners. *If they shall say unto you, Behold he is in the desert* § (among those that withdraw themselves from the publick worship) *goe not forth: Behold he is in the secret Chambers, believe it not.* q. d. When men shall tell you, in such an House, Parlour, or Chamber, there is one that *holds forth* Christ most sweetly, let us goe hear him; goe not forth, believe it not.

* Prov. i. 21, 22. † Col. ii. 3.
‡ Hooker's *Eccles. polit. l.* 5. *Sect.* 18.
§ Mat. xxiv. 26.

For

For what sweet Doctrine of Christ, his Person, or Offices, can you hear there, which you cannot or may not hear in the publick? Why then will you baulk the way of God's appointment, and seek Christ in ways of your own invention?

Now it is a wonder, that such as will pretend to Christ's example in circumstantials of the smallest sort, as *gestures*, *vestures*, and such like; yet will take boldness wilfully and constantly to swerve from his pattern in matters of such weight, as concern mens Eternal Salvation.

Neither did the Apostles of Christ after him, ever (as the Persons in question) thrust themselves into the places and charges one of another; But as the World was divided amongst them (to whom they were to preach the Gospel) so they did not intrude into one anothers line. They did not ἀλλοτριοεπισκοπεῖν, meddle with the cure of Souls, committed to the care and charge of others, lest God should say unto them, *who required this at your hands?*

This is plain from the words of the Apostle* we will not boast, εἰς τὰ ἄμετρα, of things without our measure, or not measured out to us. *Significat regiones quas Deus nostræ prædicationi non destinavit, nec admensus est* †. He means

* 2 Cor. x. 13, 16

† C. A Lapid. & Bez. *in Loc.*

those

those Countries which God hath not measured out, nor appointed them to preach unto.

'Tis likely the false Apostles were wont to glory that they had been *Itinerants*, and travelled throughout all parts of the World, preaching the Gospel. But (saith St. *Paul*) I will glory onely of this, that I have contained my self within those Limits and Bounds which God by his providence hath set me. He hath appointed me such a portion of his People to preach unto, and *nihil aliud appetam, vel mihi sumam* *. I will desire no more, nor take upon me to meddle with any more. Ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὸ μέτρον τοῦ κανόνος, *but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us.* By the word κανὼν, (which properly signifies a line to measure out Land †, to every owner his proper portion) the Apostle understands (by a *Metonymy*) a certain quantity and portion of God's Field, the Church, in the tilling and manuring of which, he was to labour. And (saith the Apostle ‡) *we stretch not our selves beyond this measure of ours.* q. d. I do not meddle or make to preach in any of those places, where I have no right so to doe; nor to till that Field that is

* Calv. *in Loc.*

† κάνονα *vocavit assignatam sibi certam veluti arvi Dominici portionem, in quâ excolendâ laboraret.* Beza, *in Loc.*

‡ *v.* 14.

appointed

appointed for another man to labour in; nor to plant the Gospel in those Countries, which God hath committed to another man's care and pains.

God divided the World amongst the Apostles, distributing to every one of them a certain portion of his people, to preach the Gospel unto, measuring it out unto them, as it were, by line. As the Land of *Canaan* was divided among the twelve tribes of *Israel*, the Sons of *Jacob*. (*He divided them an inheritance by line* *; the manner whereof may be seen at large in the Book of *Joshuah*) in like manner to the twelve Apostles was the World divided; either by a Divine appropriation, or by a voluntary partition, to every one of them was allotted his proper portion, where he was to preach the Gospel and plant a Church. As to St. *Thomas* †, *India*: to St. *Matthew*, *Ethiopia*: to St. *John*, *Asia*; &c. St. *Paul* was to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, and St. *Peter* to the Jews: *Gal.* ii. 7. It was a great sin which God caveats his People against, *to remove their Neighbours Land-mark* ‡, whereby every man's inheritance in the Land of *Canaan* was limited. A great sin it is in all places;

* Ps. lxxviii. 55.

† C. A Lapide. *vid.* Platina *in vitâ* Petri.

‡ Deut. xix. 14. Prov. xxii. 28.

And

And therefore among the Curses pronounced against the Breakers of the Law, this is the third; *Cursed be he that removeth his Neighbours Land-mark* * : to which all the People were to say *Amen.* The *Hebrews* had a saying, *He that removeth his Neighbours Land mark, and taketh of his Neighbours Limit into his own, though it be but one inch; if he doe it by force it is rapine, if he doe it in secret it is theft* †. Accordingly, the Apostles thought it a great fault in any of them, to enter into their Neighbours Limits, or to take to themselves but an inch of their possession; and left that to the false Apostles, to *boast in another mans line*, and to intrude themselves into those places to preach, where any other was appointed for that work. *Solicitè cavebant* ‡ (saith Learned *Camero*) they were exceeding carefull not to intrench one upon the other, or not to preach the Gospel in those places where others were appointed to preach, *nisi forte vel obiter, vel necessariâ de Causâ*, unless it were *in transitu*, onely in a Journey, as St. *Paul* at *Rome*, as he travelled into *Spain* §, or upon some other extraordinary occasion. Therefore the Apostle

* Deut. xxvii. 17.

† Maymon. *tract. de furt. c.* 7. *l.* 11.

‡ Camero *prælect. ad* Mat. xvi. 18, 19. *pag.* 11, *col.* 2.

§ Rom. xv. 24.

saith,

saith, he did φιλοτιμεῖσθαι, ambitiously study and endeavour *, *not to preach the Gospel where Christ was named, lest he should build upon another man's Foundation:* But to keep within his *Line*, amongst the People appointed for his pains in the Ministry. Not, but that he might, upon occasion preach elsewhere: for we reade that he preached at *Damascus* † where those Christians were which he would have brought bound to *Jerusalem*. But this was occasionally, not purposely. As a Minister now may do, when he travels from his own place, and hath occasion to stay abroad, upon request or leave, bestow his pains elsewhere. As *Clemens* ‡ tells us it was the custome of the primitive times, that if any Bishop or Presbyter came to another, he was intreated to preach. But concerning St. *Paul's* preaching abroad out of his own precincts, whether upon intreaty, or otherwise, we need not inquire, seeing he had an Apostolical power, which was of universal extent in it self, and such as no Minister now can lay claim to. His Commission was (as the rest of the Apostles were) general, and (originally) not confined to any one place, as other Ministers are, but they were to *teach all Nations* §. Yet because every

* Rom. xv. 20. † Act. ix. 20.
‡ Clem. *constit. L.* 2. *c.* 48. § Mat. xxviii. 19.

one

one of them could not travel and preach in every Countrey, therefore it pleased the Lord afterwards in Wisedom, for good Causes, to order it (as it were) by a second Decree, that *Paul* should specially have a care of, and preach to the *Gentiles**. Yet this did no way diminish his Apostolical Authority, nor forbid him from preaching at all to the *Jews*, or *Peter* to the *Gentiles*, if occasion did serve; for of *Paul* it is expresly said that he was to carry Christ's Name both to the *Gentiles* and to the *Children of Israel*†. And it is generally believed that he was the Authour of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. And of St. *Peter* it is not doubted that he both at *Antioch* and elsewhere, preached the Gospel both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The Apostolical power did extend to all Nations, but the Conveniency of the Church did require that some of them should be fixed to one sort of People in one place, and some to another. 'Tis true, St. *Paul* saith he was *troubled with the care of all the Churches*‡. *i. e.* as he was an Apostle, so the care of all the Churches lay upon him, *quod ad jus attinet, & potestatem*, (saith *Camero*) he had right and power, to take care of all the Churches, as an Apostle, and so differing from all Bishops

* Act. xxii. 21. Rom. i. 5. 1 Tim. ii. 7. Gal. ii. 7.
† Act. ix. 15. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 28.

and

and Presbyters now. And doubtless (as all good Ministers of Christ do) he did take all the care that lawfully he might, or could, of the whole Church of Christ; especially of all those within his own precincts, and of his own planting; which, by an usual *Synecdoche* in Scripture, are termed, *all*. Yet οἰκονομικῶς, for order and peace sake, it pleased God that their persons and labours should be appointed for several distinct parts of the World, as in his infinite Wisedom he saw was most convenient, for the better propagation of the Gospel of Christ, in all the World. And it is the observation of the Excellent Divine *Martin Chemnitius* in his Commentary on that temporary precept of our Saviour Christ to his Disciples. *Goe not into the way of the Gentiles, &c* *. *Hoc temporarium præceptum fideles verbi Dei ministros admonet, ut singuli se intra metas legitimæ suæ vocationis, ad pascendum illum Dei gregem, qui ipsis commissus est* (1 Pet. v. 2.) *contineant, neo latiùs evagentur, aut falcem suam in alterius pastoris messem, nisi speciali concessione vel vocatione, mittant* †. This temporary precept doth warn all the faithfull Ministers of God's word, that all of them should contain themselves within the bounds of their

* Mat. x. 5, 6.

† Chemnit. *Harm. Evang. c. 72. pag.* 1025.

lawfull

lawfull Calling, to feed that flock of God that is committed unto them, and not to wander abroad or thrust their hook into the harvest of another Pastour, without his special leave or calling.

By all which it appears that a forcible or surreptitious entry of one Minister, into another's charge, is destitute of all Scripture president or allowance; and therefore cannot be the Ordinance of God.

The Example of the Apostles meeting and preaching sometimes in private Houses, I conceive, cannot (but most impertinently) be urged to defend the practice I here dispute against. For,

1. 'Tis not to the question, which is, of a setled constituted Church, where a preaching Ministry is established by Law. The Christian Church in the Apostles days, was not setled and established, as is ours, but in a way to be so.

2. The Magistrate was then heathen all the World over, ours now Christian. Publick preaching and Christian meetings, were not then suffered; our Church-Assemblies, are not onely allowed and protected, but commanded by Sovereign Authority.

3. They had then, either none at all, or very few Christian Churches erected, and so were forced

forced to meet where they could; we want not Churches, but hearts to resort to them.

4. The Apostles had a general and *extraordinary* call to preach any where, through all Coasts and Parts of the World, where they were appointed to plant Churches; so have not the Persons in question. The office of an Apostle or Evangelist is now ceased.

5. It can never be proved, that the Apostles did, or would have made use of their private meetings, either in competition with or opposition to the publick Ordinances of God (as our modern Conventicles are) but in subserviency (according as the necessity of those times did require) to what publick and solemn Assemblies, they could then, or might in after-times, enjoy. For as our Saviour made use of all private Conferences and Meetings, not in separation from, competition with, or opposition against, but in professed subserviency to the Synagogue-service, and Temple-worship of the Jewish Church; so I am perswaded, that the Apostles of Christ, together with the primitive Christians, would have done the like, had the case in their time, with respect to the publick exercise of Christian Religion, been the same, or the like to what it was in our Saviour Christ's time, with respect to the publick exercise of the Religion of the *Jews*.

But

But forasmuch as there were no Conventions for publick exercise of Christian Religion permitted or commanded in those times, untill the *Roman* Empire, and other Kingdoms of the World, became Christian; it was therefore a thing impossible, that the private Meetings of the Apostles and those primitive Christians, should be so made use of, in subordination to the publick Assemblies as were the private Meetings of our Saviour and his Disciples in the Jewish Church. So that the case and condition of Christianity in the primitive times, is so different from, and contrary to, what it is in the Church of *England*, where the publick worship is protected, and commanded by Authority, that their private Meetings cannot possibly hold any proportion or similitude with ours. So that to argue from private Meetings in those times of persecution of Christianity, to private Meetings in *England* in these days, is to take away the subject of the question, and then to argue the case.

6. Neither did one Apostle then thrust himself into the place where another was to labour, but contained himself within the compass of his *Line*, and portion of God's People that he was appointed to preach to. But the matter in question is of a quite contrary nature, *viz.* of a silenced Minister's intruding himself in amongst a People, over whom there is a preaching Ministry

nistry established, and there taking upon him to gather Conventions, teach that People and perform ministerial Acts amongst them contrary to good Laws, without the consent, yea against the allowance of the Pastour of the place. So that neither the example of our Saviour Christ, nor of his Apostles can be brought to justifie or allow any such practice.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT VI.

THAT which God in his word hath branded with a black mark, forewarning and commanding his People to avoid, cannot be his ordinance or means of grace. For it is not God's manner to stygmatize or disgrace his own ordinances, or to forbid or discourage any in the use of them; but to dignifie, advance the honour, and strictly to enjoin the use of them: as knowing that the Devil and his instruments will sufficiently vilifie and disgrace them, and that there will be enough in all ages, who will disuse and forsake them. Yea God hath so far dignified his ordinances of the word and sacrament; (which he intends to make use of as means of grace) that when he might have wrought it in mens hearts immediately by his own Spirit, yet he hath put them off to his Ministers to doe it, which is no small honour. The case of the *Eunuch* in the *Acts* makes this plain, *The Spirit bad* Philip *join himself to the Chariot* *. Yea when God himself hath begun the work, yet he would not perfect it himself, but hath handed

* Act. viii. 29.

it over to his Ministers, to be completed by them. This he did at the Conversion of St. *Paul, He sent Ananias to him, who entered into the House, and put his hands on him and said, Brother* Saul, *the Lord (even Jesus which appeared to thee in the way as thou camest) hath sent me that thou shouldst receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost*. What greater honour than this, could God have put upon his Ordinance of the Ministry?*

But he hath set a black mark, and brand upon the Persons and Ministry in question, and commanded a withdrawing from them. *Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: for they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus, but their own bellies, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple†.* The Emphasis of the Apostles words is worthy our observation. *Mark them*, signifying such a diligent, wary, and circumspect care, as Watchmen use that stand on an high Tower to descry the approach of an Enemie. They mark diligently all Comers, and give notice according as

* Act. ix. 17.

† Rom. xvi. 17, 18. Σκοπειν, *scil't. attente & diligenter quasi hostes è speculâ observare.* Beza.

they

they apprehend any danger, for the preservation of the City. *And avoid them;* as dangerous Persons, hurtfull to Christian Society. And how sweet and fair soever their words seem to be, yet they will *eat as doth a Canker* *. They give not their poison, but wrapt up in Honey. Their smooth Language is their net, wherewith they catch many a simple Soul, that is not exceeding carefull lest any man should beguile him (as *Joab* did *Amasa* †) with enticing words. Their flattering speeches and specious pretenses of Purity and Doctrine, and tenderness of Conscience, tend to no other, but to deceive the *simple* and unwary, to get themselves a maintenance, and to fill their *own bellies*, they are like the false Apostles in the Church of *Corinth*, *who transformed themselves into the Apostles of Christ, yet were but deceitfull workers, to bring that People into bondage, to devour them, and to take of them* ‡.

How guilty the persons in question are, of *causing Divisions* amongst People wherever they come, of renting the Unity of the Church, and disturbing the peace thereof; of giving offence to Rulers and Governours by their constant and wilfull violation of all Ecclesiastical and Civil

* 2 Tim. ii. 17. † 2 Sam. xx. 9, 10.
‡ 2 Cor. xi. 13, 20.

order and discipline, is too notoriously known by sad experience in all places. And whether the other Character in the text, belongs to them, that they are γαστρίμαργοι, and seek not so much mens Souls (for therein they may spare their pains as needless, where there is a preaching Ministry established) as their purses, Καπηλεύοντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *making merchandize of the word of God* *; their hearers and followers are best able to tell, and will (I think) in a while, be weary of it. In the mean time, we that are Pastours of Flocks, find by experience, in those places where these persons intrude themselves, that the People are ready to pull their own Ministers bread out of their mouths, to feed those their new Masters, live we never so blamelesly, and take we never so much pains amongst them, for the good of their Souls. Yea, they hate those their Ministers most, who best deserve their love, and lay most obligations on them. According to that of the Philosopher, *Leve æs alienum debitorem facit, grave, inimicum* †. A bad Debtor when he owes but a small summ, will be contented to look towards you; but when it is great, more than he can well pay, or, as much as he thinks he can get, then he will be glad to be rid of you.

* 2 Cor. ii. 17. † Sen.

Again:

Again: The Apostle foretells, that towards the latter end of the World (and surely those days are come upon us) *Perilous times shall come, and there shall be many that shall creep into houses, and lead Captive silly Women—; from such turn away* *. And whom do the men (we are speaking of) most prevail upon, and draw after them? but easie and unstable souls, such as have itching Ears, *always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,* well meaning People that are spurred on with zeal, and want judgment to hold the reins, many times an over vehement bending into some way of our own chusing, doth not onely withdraw us from the left hand way, the way of Idolatry and Superstition (from which we should all withdraw) but from the middle way too, in which we should all walk †. And then the danger is great. The Devil doth many times make zeal and religion his instrument, to drive men on to incredible extremities of impiety. For, if he cannot take away mens faith, yet he will quench their Charity to others, even to those to whom they owe it most. "For zeal, except it

* 2 Tim. iii. 5, 6.

† *Sæpe fit ut qui falsum ex una parte apparens vident, ejus fugiendi studio abrepti longiùs, non in verum deveniant, sed in falsum alia parte positum, atque ita errorem non exuunt sed mutent.* Hug. Grotius, *in disquisit. Pelagiana, pag.* 1.

"be

" be ordered aright, when it bendeth it self to
" conflict with things, either indeed, or but
" imagined to be opposite to Religion, useth the
" razor many times with such eagerness, that
" the very life of Religion is thereby hazarded,
" through hatred of tares, the corn in the field
" is plucked up. So that zeal needeth both
" ways a sober guide *. Zeal against Popery
" (saith another learned Authour, who conceals
" his name) except it be bridled by discretion,
" and attended by equal pace of strength, is
" not the way to protect, but to betray a cause.
" Those that were lately zealous for the *good old*
" *cause*, lost it; and the King had not better
" friends, than his most implacable Enemies.
" Fury is as bad in a Champion, as torpour; it
" is an even temperature of wisedom and valour
" that doeth the execution. A sober Protestant
" though he rageth less, shall prevail more on a
" Papist, than a mad Fanatique. The greatest
" part of zeal against Popery that is found
" amongst the Nonconformists, is like that of
" one frantick, who wounds himself, whilst he
" would strike his foe. They cannot confute it
" without condemning themselves. This un-
" guided zeal will be sure to run far enough
" from Popery, and so runs into it; as he that
" sails round the Globe, the farther he goes,

* Hooker *Eccles. polit.* l. 5. sect. 3.

" after

" after he is half way, the nearer he approacheth " to the place whence he set out. The Quakers, " a considerable part of the Nonconformists, " railed at Popery, till they began to be taken " for Jesuits, or their Disciples."

The like *Stygma* the Apostle St. *Jude* casts upon such Persons, *There are certain men crept in unawares**, &c. παρεισέδυσαν. How disgracefully and disdainfully the Scripture seems to speak of them, who irregularly, and contrary to good order and lawfull appointment, intrude themselves, as Teachers, into the Church, under pretence of Religion? They *creep* † in amongst People; they come in by stealth, as if they came in at a Window or Back-door, insinuating themselves into flocks and societies of God's People, *creeping* to Conventicles; professing themselves to be the onely *Gospel-preachers*, and pure Worshippers of God, as if all Religion were lost, except what they bring and profess: Whereas they are indeed (unless we will mince the Appellation the Holy Scripture fastens on them) but a new sort of *Creepers* gotten into the body of the Church. *From such* (saith the Holy Ghost) *turn away* ‡.

Again, St. *Paul*, *Now we command you, bre-*

* Jude 4.

† παρισδύω, *subrepo, furtim intro.*

‡ 2 Tim. iii. 5, 6.

thren,

*thren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not according to the Tradition he hath received from us**. With more Apostolical Gravity and Authority, a Duty cannot be urged on Christians, than this, of withdrawing or separating from such, as walk ἀτάκτως, disorderly. The Metaphor (say Expositours) is borrowed from the custome of War; wherein every Souldier hath his proper station and employment appointed him, from which when he swerves, he becomes ἄτακτος, out of his rank. Now in an Army, every Officer hath his place, Company and Command assigned him by his General, whereunto he must keep, and from which he must not stir. And if he should leave his place, and take upon him, either to make an attempt on the Enemy of his own head, without Commission and Orders from his General, though with never so good success; or command in another Company, than that which is assigned and allotted to him by Authority, he is guilty of a breach of that εὐταξία, good order and discipline that ought to be in an Army, and brings in a most odious and destructive disorder and confusion: and so deserves to be either quite cashiered, or otherwise by Martial Law severely

* 2 Thes. iii. 6.

to

to be punished. Yea, so absolutely necessary hath it been thought, in the opinion of experienced Souldiers, that the Laws and Orders of Martial-discipline in an Army should be strictly observed, that whosoever have erred from it, though in the *least Punctilio*, have been adjudged worthy of death without mercy. Famous to this purpose is that story we reade in *Valerius Maximus*, of *Manlius Torquatus* Consul of the *Romans* in the Latin War, who commanded his own Son to be beheaded, for fighting the Enemy without his Father's Privity and Command, though he was provoked thereunto by *Geminius Metius* General of the *Tusculans*, and although he had obtained a signal Victory, and very much and rich spoil: *Satiùs esse judicans patrem forti filio, quam patriam militari disciplinâ carere**: Judging it better that a Father should be deprived of a valiant Son, than that his Country should want Military discipline. The Church is by Christ twice together in one place said to be an *Army with banners*†: he that is the Commander in chief is God himself, holy, just and wise; not *the Authour of Confusion*, but the institutour and lover of *order*, and the hater and punisher of such as wilfully transgress such good rules of wholsome discipline, as he,

* Valer. Max. L. 2. c. 7. † Cant. vi. 4, 10.

either

either immediately by himself or mediately by his Deputies on earth, shall establish amongst his People. And is Discipline so needfull in an *Army*, and can it be thought needless in the *Church?* Is our *spiritual* warfare of less danger or concernment than our bodily? Shall it be thought to be a venial offence, to be committed without danger, when a person shall undertake to intrude himself into the place and company of another, and lead on, and engage a Party in the Church militant, into ways of *schism* and profaneness, in opposition to the way of true Religion and Worship of God established, not onely without any lawfull allowance, but contrary to all Law and Discipline, both Civil and Ecclesiastical? The baseness and wickedness of such doings, is excellently displayed by Learned Doctor *Henry More* in his *Apology* annexed to the second part of *his enquiry into the Mystery of iniquity* *. "Because some men (saith he) "think themselves of more popular gifts for "Prayer and Exhortation; for these to spur "out, and run on in a Career, without attend-"ing the direction of their Superiours, were as "if the Toy should take those Troopers that "are best horsed, to set madly a gallopping, "because they find their horses will goe so

* *Pag.* 549.

"freely,

"freely, and so turn the orderly March of the "Army into a confused Horse-race, and put "themselves into a rout, even without the assault or pursuit of any Enemy."

Can it be pleasing to Christ that any should follow such men in their irregular and hare-brain'd ways, when his Apostle bids all men *from such to withdraw* *? To what end should there be such flocking after them, unless their followers could be partakers of some spiritual benefit from them? But this cannot be. For their disorderly walking, and busie medling where they have not to doe, renders all they doe unprofitable, and is (in effect) a spending of a great deal of pains, to no purpose; wearying themselves out *to weave the Spiders Webb*, and to sow to the wind. The Apostle doth most excellently express it in a most elegant allusion of words, μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους, *working not at all, but are busie-bodies* †. Their work is neither lawfull, nor profitable. For seeing that the Ministers of Christ are disposed of in the Church κατὰ τὴν οἰκονομίαν Θεῦ, *according to the dispensation of God* ‡; it doth follow, that those things which they teach or doe, receive

* 2 Thes. iii. 6.

† Syr. *nihil quicquam operantes nisi vana.*

‡ Col. i. 25.

their

their force and effect not from their own wills and authority, but from the Authority, Approbation and Concurrence of him that sends them. And therefore what a Minister doeth contrary to the will of God, cannot be of any force or effect at-all, as to the accomplishment of the end, on mens souls, for which God ordained the Ministry, for he is bound to preach not onely those things, but in that manner as God hath appointed.

God's Command for a separation and withdrawing from such dividing, house-creeping, and disorderly Persons, must needs argue their Ministry not to be his ordinance, since he so brands it, and gives such Cautions against it.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT VII.

THAT cannot be the Ordinance of God for the working of grace, that is performed without any manner of Commission or Authority. For the necessity of keeping that good order which God hath commanded in his Church, requires, that no man should attempt any thing of that important nature and high concernment, upon his own head, or, by a power derived no higher than from himself. Whosoever shall take upon him to preach God's word, in order to the Conversion or saving of souls, must be able to give a good answer, to that question which the chief Priest and Elders of the People, put to our Saviour Christ, when he was teaching in the *Temple. By what Authority doest thou these things, and who gave thee this Authority*?* He that cannot make a sufficient and satisfactory reply to it, and yet shall adventure upon the work, may justly be accounted rash, indiscreet, and more hasty than needeth, or than wisedom requireth.

But such is the Ministry in question; under-

* Mat. xxi. 23.

taken

taken without any Authority or Commission. For all the Authority and Commission that a Minister hath, in a constituted setled Church, he receives in his *ordination*. Before that, he had no Authority or Warrant at all to preach the word, or to perform any ministerial Act. Now all the Authority that a Minister of the Church of *England* hath delivered to him in his *ordination*, is expressed in these words: *Take thou Authority to preach the word, and to administer the Holy Sacraments in the Congregation where thou shalt be lawfully appointed thereunto.*

In which words it is plain that the exercise of his Ministry is restrained to *lawfull appointment*, as to the place where it shall be exercised. What that *lawfull appointment* is, I need not trouble my self or the reader here, to look into, seeing the Ministry in question hath not the least colour of it, or pretence to it, for it is supposed to be in a place where there is another *lawfully appointed* to perform the same. In the Council of *Chalcedon* (where there were 630 Fathers met, about the year of our Lord 451) it was thus decreed: *Neminem absolutè ordinari jubemus, Presbyterum, aut Diaconum, nec quemlibet in Ecclesiasticâ ordinatione constitutum: Eos autem qui absolutè ordinantur decrevit sancta synodus vacuam*

vacuam habere, manûs impositionem *. That none should be ordained absolutely, whether Presbyter or Deacon, or any in Ecclesiastical orders: and whosoever should be absolutely ordained, the Holy Synod decreed his ordination void. And the 33*rd* Canon of the Church of *England* saith, *That it hath been long since provided by many Decrees of ancient Fathers, that none should be admitted either Deacon or Priest, who had not first some certain place where he might use his function.*

For though in *ordination* the person ordained is made a *Minister of the Catholick Church*; and being ordained to a function, he may (by the appointment of those that have Authority in the Church, or with leave of the Pastour of the Congregation) preach any where: And although (as Mr. *Baines* observes) *It is good for a Minister to be like a young Woman, so full breasted, that she can both feed her own Child, and lend a draught, upon intreaty, to her Neighbours* †: Yet he is not a *Catholick Minister of the Church* (as the Apostles and Evangelists were; whose office, being *extraordinary*, is long since ceased in the Church,) and therefore ought not to take upon himself to preach any where.

* *Concil. Chalced. Can. 6.*

† P. Baines *in* Eph. iii. 2.

Neither yet did the Apostles themselves doe so, (as hath been proved) though their Commission was without Limit, as to place. But kept within their *Line* measured forth by God to them. It was never God's intention that the two Tribes of *Levi*, and *Gad*, should be confounded one with another; nor is it any way agreeable with Scripture rules and order, that a Minister should be, a *wandring star*, but fixed regularly in some Orb of the Church, as a Pastour of some Flock or Congregation of his People.

Seeing therefore none is lawfully appointed to perform the ministerial function, or any part of it, in such a place as is in question, but the Minister of that Congregation; acts of the Ministry done by any other Person that shall intrude himself among them, without and against his consent, contrary to lawfull appointment, and all good constitution that concern admission of Ministers to pastoral charges, are done without any Authority, Commission, or effect; and consequently cannot be God's Ordinance, who doth not use to send any to preach in order to the working of grace in mens hearts, without any Power or Authority, yea against both.

ARGU-

ARGUMENT VIII.

THAT cannot be the ordinance of God, as instrumental to the work of grace, that instead of building up People in Faith and Holiness, demolisheth Christian Duty, and, in the natural tendency of it, produceth sinfull and pernicious effects. 'Tis true, these may accidentally follow, through the Corruption of man's nature, and Satan's suggestions, upon the most right and purest dispensation of God's word and ordinances. St. *Peter* speaks of *some that stumble at the word**. And St. *Paul* saith†, *to some we are the savour of death unto death*, as to other some, *the savour of life unto life*. The word preach'd (like the *water of jealousie*)‡ when it is received into an honest and good heart, it doeth it good, and makes it *fruitfull;* but when into a corrupt, it doeth hurt and causeth it to *rot*. Yet the most proper intent, and genuine fruit and effect of it, is to doe good, to inlighten, convince, convert, and save mens souls.

But the Ministry in question doth directly produce sinfull and pernicious effects, and such

* 1 Pet. ii. 8. † 2 Cor. ii. 16.
‡ Numb. v. 27, 28.

as a tender heart may tremble to think on. I would not have the reader expect that I should here make a particular enumeration of every one of those sinfull fruits and effects, that are produced by the Ministry of intruders, and upholders of Conventicles: for that is a thing no more possible for me to doe, than it is for any man particularly to reckon up every one of the many thousands of absurdities that will unavoidably follow in dispute, upon one that is granted or yielded to*. I will content my self therefore (and let the reader doe the like) with the mention of so many of them onely, as I here use arguments against the practice which is the proper cause of them, and thousands more.

I. First, it tends to the breaking of that bond of near relation, that is, and ought to be betwixt a Pastour and his flock. Though it be a truth well known to but a few in this age, and little considered by any, yet it is nevertheless certain and undoubted, that there is a very intimate relation betwixt a lawfull Pastour and his People. The Scripture seems to assert a kind of *Matrimonial* union betwixt them. A Minister is, after a sort, *married* to that Congregation over whom he is lawfully set; and they to him.

* *Posito uno absurdo mille sequuntur.*

Our

Our legal incumbency on a Church, is our Marriage to that Church. Hence is that phrase of the Apostle to the *Corinthians, I am jealous over you with a Godly jealousie*. Sumpta est metaphora à procis zelotypis,* as *Beza* notes; a Metaphor taken from the manner of a Person espoused to a Woman, who cannot endure any one to be a Companion or sharer with him in her affections. For as a King cannot endure a rival with him in his Kingdom, nor an Husband in the Marriage-bed.

Οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη, εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω.

So neither can a Minister in his Parish. And though in regard of internal, spiritual, everlasting, and inseparable union, Christ himself is the Husband of the Catholick Church†. Yet in regard of external and ministerial duty, a particular Minister of Christ‡, may be said to be *married* to that particular flock or portion of God's People, *over whom*, in a regular and orderly manner, *the Holy Ghost hath set him.* This made St. *Ambrose* expound that place of St. *Paul (A bishop must be the Husband of one wife§)* allegorically *unius, uxoris*‖. *Si ad su-*

* 2 Cor. xi. 2. † Rom. vii. 4. Ib. xvi. 7.
‡ John iii. 29. § 1 Tim. iii. 2.
‖ Ambros. *ut citatur à* Cotono *exc.* 4. *de dig. Sacerd.*

perficiem tantum literæ respiciamus, prohibet digamum Episcopum ordinari: si vero ad altiorem sensum conscendamus, inhibet Episcopum duas usurpare Ecclesias *. If we respect the Letter of the text (saith he) St. *Paul* forbids any that hath had two Wives to be ordained a Bishop: but if we ascend to an higher sense, he forbids a Bishop to take to himself two Churches. And St. *Hierome* argues out of those words *(Eph. 5.) Husbands love your wives: Audiant Episcopi, audiant Presbyteri, audiant Doctores subjectis suis se esse subjectos.* Let Bishops, Priests, and Doctours learn in this, that when they have married themselves to a Flock or Congregation, they are become subject to their Subjects. How? subject to their Subjects? What are they become inferiour to their Flocks? In no wise. *They are over you in the Lord*† (saith St. *Paul)* underlings then they are to none of them. But they are so subject to their flock, as an Husband is subject to his Wife, and no otherwise; Now she is to be subject to him, and he (by God's Law) to *rule over her*‡. So that the subjection he means, is the subjection of Love. As *Pliny*

* *Vid.* Hieronymi *Epist.* Oceano *p.* 676. *Ne virginalis pauperculæ societate contempta, ditioris adulteræ quærat amplexus.*

† 1 Thes. v. 11. ‡ Gen. iii. 16. 1 Cor. xi. 3.

told

told *Trajan* the Emperour, *Nihil magis à te subjecti animo factum est, quàm quod imperare cœpisti* *. A King doeth nothing so like a subject, as to love his subjects, to devise ways, and to use his power for their good. Such a subjection is that of the Husband to the Wife, and that of a Pastour to his flock, to whom he is *married*, and to no other. Whence (as Mr. *Prinn* observes) he is stiled †, *Parochus*, and his People, *Parochia*, by the Canonists and Lawyers, because he is espoused to that peculiar Parish. And to this agreeth the *15th* Canon of the *Nicene* Council ‡, *matrimonium inter Episcopum & Ecclesiam esse contractum, &c.*

There are several things that prove a very near relation betwixt a lawfull Pastour and his People.

1. The titles the Holy Ghost gives in Scripture to Ministers and their People. They are called *watchmen*, and *shepherds*, *Es.* lxii. 6. These, their *flock* over whom they watch, and whom they keep. *Act.* xx. 28. They are called *Fathers*. 2 *King*. vi. 21. 1 *Cor*. iv. 15. 1 *Thes*. ii. 11. These, their *Children*. 1 *Cor*. iv. 14. 2 *Cor*. vi. 13. *Gal*. iv. 19. 1 *Tim*. i. 2. *Philem*.

* Plin. 2*dus in Epist.* Trajano. *see* 1 King. xii. 7.

† *Legal. resol. p.* 6.

‡ *Concil.* Nicen. *Can.* 15.

x. 1 *Joh.* v. 21. Ministers are called *husbandmen*, and *builders*; and their people, God's *tillage*, and *building*, 1 *Cor.* iii. 9. They are called *stewards*; their people, God's *household*, to whom they are to give their portion of meat, *Luc.* xii. 41.

2. The duties imposed by God on either party, prove a very near relation betwixt them. As a Minister is commanded to take the *oversight of them* *; to *feed them* †; and to perform the office of a faithfull servant of Christ, that he may *give an account* ‡ to him; for his flock. So the People also are charged with many duties towards their Pastours. As,

1. To *know* and love them dearly, as the *Galatians* did St. *Paul* §, and as he enjoins all Christians to doe toward their Ministers. *We beseech you, Brethren, to know them that labour amongst you, and over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and esteem them very highly in love for their works sake* ‖. Indeed the vulgar Latin, reade it, *ut noveritis*. But *Beza* renders it, *ut adnoscatis*, that you acknowledge them as your Pastours and Teachers. And (as Learned *Zanchi* ¶), *pro pastoribus vestris ac patribus reverenter*

* Act. xx. 28. † 1 Pet. v. 2. ‡ Heb. xiii. 17.
§ Gal. iv. 14, 15. ‖ 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.
¶ Zanch. *in Loc.*

amplectamini, that ye reverently receive and embrace them as your Pastours and Fathers. And as *David* saith in the Psalms, *I will not know a wicked person** (where, *not to know*, is to contemn) so, to *know*, is to have in reverence and honour. Thus our Saviour professeth to wicked men, *I never knew you* †. Which places are urged both by *Beza* and *Zanchi*, to prove their exposition. *And that you highly esteem them in love.* ὑπὲρ ἐκ περισσοῦ. Some reade it, abundantly: Some, exceedingly: It properly signifies, more than exceedingly; Love in abundance; in an overflowing measure; an overplus of love. *Beza* tenders the same expression in another place, *summâ cum exuperantiâ* ‡, with the greatest exuberance of love. And here, *ut supra modum charos ducatis*, that you account them above measure dear to you.

2. To obey them, and submit to their pastoral office and rule over them. *Heb.* xiii. 17.

3. To afford them an honourable and liberal maintenance. *Matt.* x. 10. 1 *Cor.* ix. 6—15. *Rom.* xv. 27. *Gal.* vi. 6—8. 1 *Tim.* v. 17, 18. Not out of charity, as a free gift; but of justice, as a due debt. 3 *Joh.* 9.

4. To seek their *comfort*, and to give them all

* Ps. ci. 4. † Matt. vii. 23.
‡ Bez. *in* Eph. iii. 20.

due

due *encouragement*, that they may doe the work of the Ministry among them, *with joy and not with grief*. Heb. xiii. 17.

All which duties would not have been enjoined on both parties, Pastour and people, were there not a very near relation between them. Whereas none at all of these are required either of a stranger, to them; or of them to a stranger. And this is the Language both of the *Presbyterian*, and *Independent* Ministers, when they speak of the relation that is betwixt them and their People, they say, they are *married* to their Flock *.

Now where one of these *Demagogues*, and Patrons of Conventicles shall intrude himself into a Town or Parish, and take upon him there to set up a course of house-preaching, to administer the Sacraments, to visit the sick, and such like duties of the Ministry (as they doe) it tends directly to the breaking this bond and near relation that is betwixt Pastour and People; and breeds such alienation of affection in them, towards him, as was betwixt the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, between whom the Scripture saith *there was no Converse* †. For, they being conscious to themselves of the guilt of that, (which upon

* *Vindicat. of Presbytery. p.* 123.
† John iv. 9.

a general

a general presumption, they cannot but believe, he can in no wise take well at their hands) *viz.* that they should put themselves under the Ministry of another, they will grow to such a degree of strangeness to him, as to shun common neighbourhood and acquaintance with him; yea they will easily account him their greatest Enemy (as *Ahab* did *Elijah*, or the *Galatians* did St. *Paul)* because he doth not flatter them in that, which, how wicked and unlawfull soever it be, is therefore the sweeter to them, because forbidden, and enjoyed (as it were) by stealth. For *stollen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant* *; though the end of such ill gotten delight be in the *depth of hell* †. What esteem can they have of their Minister's Person or Office, which are look'd upon by them, as either needless or indifferent, if not tedious and burthensome? What regard to his Doctrine, which (as experience shews us) is, and will be so lightly set by, that some will wholly forsake attendance on it, others come to hear (as there is too much cause to doubt) more out of curiosity than necessity, and (as some have not been ashamed to confess) rather to censure (as those that listned to our Saviour's Sermons *to catch him in his dis-*

* Prov. ix. 17, 18.

† *Medio de fonte leporum surgit amari aliquid.*

course)

course)* than to learn to practise? And so the Pulpit which is God's Tribunal, is made their bar, and they become *not doers of the Law, but Judges*†. What dependance can a People have on their own Pastour, in his discharge of ministerial Duties amongst them, where some are seduced into a perfect revolt from him, others brought to a loose indeterminacy in Divine worship and Church-communion, and all to a lukewarm indifference what Ministry they enjoy; and Church-Assemblies are made matter of Complement rather than necessity? Usurpation and Intrusion, as it shall never want store of friends and favourers among the ignorant and unstable vulgar, be it never so unjust; so the more abbettours and maintainers it hath in any place, the greater must the defection needs be from him, to whom they own their adherence.

And thus will that golden chain of relation, that is, and ought to be betwixt a Pastour and his People, by this means be wholly dissolved, *and those put asunder whom God hath joined together*. For, as it is in a marriage, it is not the having of an Husband, that makes the Wife honest, chast and undefiled, but her loving her Husband, and keeping her self wholly to him, otherwise the Wedlock bond is broken: so in

* Matt. xxiv 15. † Jam. iv. 11.

this

this union betwixt Pastour and People, it is not the having a Minister, that maintains and upholds the relation and conjunction, that God would have to continue between them; but the acknowledging of him, keeping to him, and depending on him in the Lord, for all ministerial Acts to be performed by him, among them; otherwise, the knot of unity that ought to be betwixt them, is untyed.

Now here I could tell the Reader so lamentable a story, of the truth of this sad effect, which upon mine own experience I have found, of this usurpation and intrusion, I am now disputing against, that if he be such a one, as hath any fear of God before his eyes, any zeal for his house, worship and service, or any care of the Unity and Peace of the Church, it would make *both his ears* at the hearing of it *tingle*.

My Parish was a Virgin, pure and undefiled, free from all invadours and underminers of her Chastity, till about four years since, when the *Act of Parliament* for the removal of such of the *Nonconformist* ministers, as refused to take the oath therein prescribed, out of all Corporations, sent or occasioned one of them (not to preach but) to inhabit amongst us. Before whose coming, there was not a Congregation in the Country (that I know) for so many People (being near 1000 souls) more entire, more unanimous,

animous, more constant at all parts of publick worship, more free from al. inclination to *schism*, *separation*, or any of the raigning Epidemical faults of this Age. We had then what happiness we could desire, and (it seems) greater than we deserved. When the ground all about us, was wet with the showres of *schism* and *prophaneness*, we (like *Gideon's fleece)* were dry. But because we gave not God thanks sufficient, he suffered Satan to erect *Altare contra Altare* (for so went the style of the ancient Church for *schism*, which in our modern Dialect is) a *Conventicle against the Church*. Now, that Congregation which was before entire, is now miserably divided, and those that lived under the oversight and teaching of one lawfull Pastour (as a chast Wife under the guidance of her own Husband) *according to God's Holy Ordinance*, are gone aside to others, and admit of the unlawfull embraces of strangers.

I could tell the Reader of some of those people *, who were formerly constant attendants on all parts of divine Worship, that are now by this means totally gone off *(non fugati, sed fugitivi*, as say the Brethren of the *Presbyterian* way, of the *Independents)* and for the space of several

* *Claudite quæso aures qui audituri estis, ne tantæ impietatis vocibus polluamini.*

years,

years, have not set their foot over the threshold of God's house: yea, so far are they withdrawn, and to so high and impious an abhorrency of God's publick Worship are they brought, as to detain their very Children from publick Baptism. They are modelled (as they call it) into a new Church-way for the enjoyment of Ordinances. And no wonder; for the Scripture tells us, that besides God's Church, *Satan* will have his too. There is *Ecclesia Credentium*, and *Ecclesia Malignantium;* according to that of *David**, *odi Ecclesiam malignantium: I have hated the Congregation of Evildoers.* And *Tertullian*† tells us, *faciunt favos & vespæ, faciunt Ecclesias & Marcionitæ. Wasps* make Combs, but empty ones; *Schismaticks* and *Sectaries* make Churches, but false ones; *Singuli quique cœtus hæreticorum se potissimum Christianos, & suam esse Ecclesiam Catholicam putant*‡; saith *Lactantius.*

Of others I could relate, that upon this sad occasion are in part revolted from the publick Assemblies of the Saints; and though they live near enough to the Church, yet come thither but now and then, and that, to hear a Sermon onely, and to no other part of divine Service:

* Ps. xxvi. 5.

† Tertul. *l.* 4. *contra* Marcion. 1.

‡ Lactant. *lib.* 4. *divinarum inst. cap.* 30.

To

To satisfie curiosity, I suppose, rather than Conscience; wherein they seem to discover much of Hypocrisie, but nothing of Piety. For, I would demand of them, doe they well, or ill, when they come? If well; why then come they not at all times, when they may? If ill; why then come they at any time? What moves them at any time to *approach the place where God's honour dwells?* Is it because he hath commanded it, or to doe him any service thereby? I ask him again, whether hath not he commanded the publick Service of the whole day, as well as a part? A *Lamb* at the Evening as well as a *Lamb* in the Morning * ? Of every Lord's day, as well as of one now and then? Why else did the Lord call the Sabbath of old *an holy Convocation* † ? As if it ought to be nothing else; as if the whole day were to be spent at Church, and in keeping publick Assemblies, so far as conveniency and edification of the people will permit. Why else did Holy *David* desire *to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever* ‡ ? Why prayed he that he might be so happy? *One thing have I desired of the Lord, that I will seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life* §. Therefore, if Conscience to obey

* Exod. xxix. 39, 41. † Levit. xxiii. 2.
‡ Ps. xxiii. 6. § Ib. xxvii. 4.

God,

God, or desire to doe him service, did draw them to his house at any time, or to any part of his Worship, the same would induce them at all times, and to all parts of it. The liberty then that such persons take in God's service, as if all were Arbitrary, argues much of hypocritical wantonness, nothing of sound or sincere godliness.

They who are *fed with Corn from Heaven, meat to the full**, are thus faln to loath the *Mannah* that rained down upon them twice every Sabbath-day. Of a third sort I could inform the Reader, who being weak, yet (I hope) well-meaning Christians, not *knowing the depths of Satan*, under a specious pretence of Piety, are not content with what they hear at Church, but must afterwards fill their heads with notions which they hear at Conventicles, wherewith *they feast themselves without fear*† after they have been fed to the full in God's house, *with Angels food. Without fear* (I say) of offending God, by breaking the order he hath set in his Church: by countenancing, abetting, or joining themselves with such unlawfull and ungospel-like Assemblies: *without fear* of offending or provoking the Rules of the Church (which they are bound to obey) by seeing their Laws despised and affronted:

* Ps. lxxviii. 24, 27. † Jude 12.

fronted: *without fear* of exposing themselves to the temptation and hazard of falling so fearfully as they cannot but see, that some of their Brethren and Neighbours have done: And *without fear* of losing what they have heard in publick by departing immediately from the *Church* to a *Conventicle;* as if all Religion did consist in nothing but hearing, and all the Service of God were but (according to the *French* scoff) *a mere Preach.* If this be the way of keeping the Sabbath, where is room then for Meditation, which the Scripture as much enjoins as hearing? *Thou shalt meditate on the Law, that thou mayst observe to doe according as is written* *. *Mary* therefore kept *Christ*'s sayings because *she pondered them in her heart* †. *David* therefore grew to be *wiser than his teachers, because God's Law was his meditation* ‡. Conference with Neighbours, and Family-instructions, will by this means also be issued out. *Thus shall you say every one to his neighbour, and every one to his brother, What hath the Lord answered, and what hath he spoken* § ? The best of Hearers, even *Christ*'s own Disciples took another course than these now doe: When they had heard their Master preach, they spent their time after Sermon in conferring

* Josh. i. 8. † Luk. ii. 19.
‡ Ps. cxix. 99. § Jer. xxiii. 25.

among

among themselves about what they had heard, and went to their Teacher to be better informed, and to have all doubts resolved *. For want of so doing, it comes to pass with too many, as sometimes it did with some of them, that though they had seen their Lord's mighty power, in feeding *five thousand men with five loaves, and two fishes;* yet their Faith was never the stronger: And this was the reason; *They considered not the miracle of the Loaves, for their heart was hardned* †. They had seen the miracle but they had not considered it, nor meditated on it, and therefore it did them no good at all. In the judgment of the *Presbyterian* Divines themselves, the way these people take is not the right. For the *Assembly of Divines* in their *Directory for Worship*, give this rule for the Sanctification of the Lord's day: that "what time is vacant be-"tween, or after the Solemn meetings of the "Congregation in publick, be spent in Reading, "Meditation, Repetition of Sermons (especially "by calling their Families to an account of what "they have heard) and Catechising of them; "holy conferences, prayer for a blessing upon "the publick Ordinances, singing of Psalms, "visiting the Sick, relieving the Poor, and such

* Joh. xvi. 17, 19. Mark iv. 10. vii. 17. x. 10, 11.
† Mark vi. 52.

"like duties of piety, charity, and mercy, ac-
"counting the Sabbath a delight*."

In a word, I could inform the Reader what impious devices have been used, not onely to make a rent in the Church, but also to keep it open, that it should never close again, by endeavouring that an irreconcileable prejudice might be perpetuated in the minds of people, against the publick Ministry and Ministers of the Church. And to the end that those poor deluded Souls, which have been drawn off from their due attendance to God's publick Ordinances, to wait on these men in their clanculary and irregular conventions, might never return to the Church any more; I have observed that the absence of one of these Masters of Conventicles, in the places where they are held, have ever been carefully supplied by the presence of some other Domestick Chaplain, to keep up their House-meetings. As if *Jeròboam's* impious policy should never be forgotten, who not daring to trust his new *divided Tribes* in a joint resort to the Temple at *Jerusalem*, set up his *Calves*† to be Worshipped by them nearer home.

But I will not rake any longer in this puddle, lest it stink in the nostrils of pious and sober

* *Directory, page* 57. † 1 King. xii. 27, 28.

Christians,

Christians, as it cannot but doe in God's already.

Now I appeal to all my judicious and learned Brethren of the Clergy, and to all persons else, of stayed principles and piety, whether for a stranger thus to pluck the work of a Pastour of a Congregation out of his hands, be tollerable in the Church of Christ, or no? Whether this practice that tends thus to divide betwixt Minister and People, breaking the near bond of relation, that is, and ought to continue between them, robbing him of his flock, and taking them off from dependance on him, for the enjoyment of the work of his ministry, be of God, or no? And whether he hath ordained any such course, as the means of Grace in his Church; or whether this be not rather a stratagem of Satan, to introduce all manner of impiety and ungodliness? The *Presbyterian* Divines themselves have given their judgment on my side, already, in this case. In these words: "To make a Rup-"ture in the body of *Christ*, and to divide "Church from Church, and to set up Church "against Church, and to gather Churches out "of true Churches: And because we differ in "something, therefore to hold Communion in "nothing; this we think hath no warrant out "of the word of God, and will introduce all "manner of confusion in Churches and Fami-

"lies; and not onely disturb, but in a little "time destroy the power of Godliness, purity "of Religion, peace of Christians, and set open "a wide gap to bring in *Atheism*, *Popery*, *He-* "*resie*, and all manner of wickedness *." So also in their Preface to the *Jus divinum* † of Church-government, in the last page save one, they have these words. "Gathering Churches "out of Churches have no footsteps in Scrip- "ture, is contrary to Apostolical practice, is the "scattering of Churches, the Daughter of "Schism, the Mother of Confusion, but the "Step-mother to Edification."

If this Doctrine of theirs be (as doubtless it is) true and godly, then surely the practices of many of them that are *Antipodes* to it, must needs be (by their own confession) very false and impious.

We reade in Scripture that *if fire break out and catch in thorns, so that the stacks of corn, or the standing corn, or the field be consumed therewith, he that kindleth the fire shall surely make restitution* ‡. By *thorns*, are generally understood such thorns as Husbandmen use in hedges, wherewith they separate and distinguish their

* *Vindicat. of Presbyt. page* 121.

† *Jus divinum regim. Eccles. in præfat.*

‡ Exod. xxii. 6.

Land

Land from other mens. By *breaking out of fire*, any man's making a fire in the field to burn up weeds, or otherwise, to make their Land fruitfull. And 'tis meant (say interpreters) of such kindling of fire, when any hurt comes of it *præter intentionem accendentis*, besides the intention of him that kindles it; it being carried by the wind, and lighting on some dry hedge, and finding combustible matter, goes farther and burns the Corn, either in shocks, or standing by. And in this case of *Casualty*, by the Law of God, restitution was to be made, because firing the hedge was the cause of the Corn's being burnt. Otherwise, if a man did wilfully and purposely set Corn on fire, he was to sustain greater punishment by the Civil Law, *vel decapitetur, vel comburatur, vel bestiis subjiciatur*, he was to be beheaded, or burnt, or cast to wild beasts. God, whose own the whole Field of the Church is, hath set an hedge of separation and distinction, to bound out every one of his servants the Minister's property. These are your limits; and this the portion of my people committed to your charge; this piece of Land is your several to manure for me, the fruit whereof I will require at your hands at harvest. He that shall (not *casually*, but *wilfully*) break down, or fire that hedge, and so cause a combustion in the Church, the least that can be required of such

such a person, is, that he make full restitution for the damage he hath caused, that he set himself to quench the fire he hath kindled, and to make up the hedge again, which he hath consumed; undeceive the People he hath seduced, by acknowledgment of his fault, restoring what he hath fraudulently taken, and cease to be any more an *incendiary* for the time to come.

To the poor deceived People, shall I say, out of zeal to God's Glory, and safety of your souls, as St. *Paul* to the *Galatians, I would they were even cut off that trouble you* * ? It were better one man or a few did perish, than that the Unity of the Church should be broken. Rather, *for loves sake*, I heartily wish, that those בְּנֵי שְׁאוֹן † *filii sonitus, tumultuous ones*, that delight to make a noise in the Church, that they may be heard, had more peaceable and quiet spirits, and would either content themselves *to doe their own business* (if they have any) or else sit still, and cease troubling you, or themselves, in matters that belong to others. And though you have been drawn away from your *Conjugal* duty to your own Pastours, and *have gone aside to others in stead of them*, by means of the amorous Courtship of such, as want not *fair speeches* and winning Oratory *to deceive the hearts of the sim-*

* Gal. v. 12. † Jer. xlviii. 45.

ple,

*ple**, but intrude themselves in amongst you, πλασοῖς λόγοις† *with feigned words;* or, ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου‡, *with wisedom of words:* or (as elsewhere the Apostle persueth it) with *excellency of speech and of wisedom* §; or, *intising words of man's wisedom*, insomuch, that (if it were possible) the very Elect would be deceived by them: Yet I hope, through the assistence of Divine grace, you will soon bethink your selves and repent, and so return from *following after your Lovers*, (with the house of *Israel*) and say, *I will goe and return to my first Husband, for then it was better with me than now* ‖.

II. Secondly, it divides the intire body of Christ also, and makes such factions as were in the Church of *Corinth*, where one said, *I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos; and another, I am of Cephas* ¶: Than which, there is nothing that more demonstrates People to be *carnal***, whatsoever they pretend to the contrary. It makes the Church of Christ (which should always be, as some time the Children of *Israel* were, from *Dan* even to *Beershebah*††, *all as one man)* to be a *Baal-Perazim* (the place where

* Rom. xvi. 18. † 2 Pet. ii. 3. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 17.
§ 1 Cor. ii. 1, 4. ‖ Hos. ii. 7. ¶ 1 Cor. i. 11, 12.
** 1 Cor. iii. 4. †† Judg. xx. 1. 11.

David

David smote the Philistins) *A Valley of Divisions* and *Breaches* *. It breeds such animosities and exasperations of mind amongst Christians, that it makes the Members of the Church, *militant* among themselves, and against their Ministers, doeing us (though unwillingly) the kindness, as to free us from that *woe* denounced by our Saviour *when all men shall speak well of us* †; and none at last but Satan and his Servants, *Atheists* and *Papists triumphant*. It causeth such rents in the Church, that the end thereof will be (unless a prodigy of Divine mercy prevent it) the common Enemy of our Religion will laugh ‡, whilst the promoters of such divisions have cause to weep.

It promotes such a War, whose Victory shall have a sorry triumph. It deals worse with the seamless Coat of Christ (which St. *Cyprian* saith was a sign intended by our Saviour §, to shew how his Church should be woven together in Unity) than the Prophet *Ahijah* the *Shilonite* did with the new garment, wherewith *Jeroboam* had clad himself, who *even rent it in twelve pieces* ‖.

* 1 Chron. xiv. 11. † Luc. vi. 26.

‡ *As the Tyrian Woman that opened the gates of the City to the Enemy, and was herself trodden to death at their entry.*

§ *Sacramento vestis & signo, declaravit Ecclesiæ unitatem.* Cyp. *de unit. Eccles. Sect.* 6.

‖ 1 King. xi. 30.

It

It mangles the body of Christ, into as many parts, as there are parties, as if it were no better than the body of the *Levite's Concubine*, which *he divided with her bones, and sent into all the quarters of Israel**. It was a worthy saying of the late reverend and learned Bishop of *Sarum*; *Si schismata Ecclesiæ tolli possunt (uti proculdubio possunt) suspendi mallem ad collum meum molam asinariam*†, *&c.* If the schisms that are in the Church may be taken away (as doubtless they may) I had rather a Milstone were hanged about my neck, and I drowned in the bottom of the Sea, than that I should any way hinder that work, or not with all my heart and strength promote it, which is so pleasing to God, and so necessary for the avoiding of scandal. A gracious speech; not unlike that of an holy Father of the Church before him *(Greg. Nazianzene)* who (as *Ruffinus*‡ reports it) in the tumultuous division of the People, cryed out, *Mitte me in mare, & non erit tempestas.* He offered himself *(Jonah* like) to be cast into the Sea, to appease the tempest in the Church, that neither the peace of it might be disturbed, or Unity broken. Some of the brethren of the *Nonconformists*

* Judg. xix. 29.

† Davenaut *ad pacem exhort.* p. 21, 22.

‡ Ruffin. *Hist. Eccl. l.* 2. *c.* 9.

have

have been of the same Judgment, whatever this or their practice, now is. Memorable to this purpose is that saying of Mr. *Baxter* to his People of *Kiderminster** " I ever loved (saith " he) a Godly peaceable Conformist, better than " a turbulent Nonconformist; and should I " make a party, or disturb the peace of the " Church, I should fear, lest I should prove a " Firebrand in Hell, for being a Firebrand in " the Church. And by all the interest I have " in your judgments and affections, I here " charge you, that if God should give me up " to any factious Church-renting course (against " which I daily pray) that you forsake me, and " follow me not a step."

It is an unhappy degree of wickedness, to be a ring-leader in any *schism*. Every accessory is faulty enough, but the first Authour abominable. Those who either by his example, suggestion, advice, connivence, or otherwise, are taught to doe ill, increase his sin as fast as they do their own. *Whosoever shall break one of the least Commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven* †. An unruly beast breaks the hedge, and feeds in forbidden Pasture; the whole herd follows; but

* Baxter *Epist. to his Book of Rest.*

† Matt. v. 19.

the

the owner must answer for all the trespass that is committed. Therefore is *Jeroboam* so often branded in holy Writ with this note of infamy, *Jeroboam the Son of Nebat, that made Israel to sin.* His fault lived, when he himself was dead; and 'tis often said by Divines, that his torment increased in Hell, according as his sin increased upon earth; and that the wickedness of *Israel* will not be taken off from his Soul for ever. It was shame enough to *Israel*, that they were made to sin by *Jeroboam*, but O the miserable Estate of *Jeroboam*, that made *Israel* to sin! his pretence was fair enough, but that was no excuse to the foulness of his crime, nor is it any mitigation to his present torment. Let the Authours of *schism* in the Church, pretend what they please, to Religion and Truth, yet how they can have the true love or power of either in their hearts or lives, that seek not the Church's Peace and Unity withall, I cannot understand. The Holy Ghost in Scripture joins both together, *Love truth and peace* *. And, *speak the truth in love* †. He follows neither, that persues them not both. It was an unquestionable Maxime amongst Christians in the ancient Church (which is no less a truth now, than ever) *non habet Dei*

* Zach. iii. 19. † Eph. iv. 15.

chari-

*charitatem, qui Ecclesiæ non diligit unitatem**. The Love of God abides not in them, who do not love, and keep, the Unity of the Church.

Nay, the practice in question, tends not onely to the dividing and distracting the Church, but even to the dissolving and destroying her being. It puts the members of the body of Christ out of joint, and causeth a Luxation of the parts; and so hinders that spiritual Nutrition, thriving and growth in grace, that ought to be in the body of Christ. For, as in the natural body of man, if a member be separated from it, it can receive no nourishment or growth; nay, if there be but a dislocation of a part, so that it be onely out of joint, it will not thrive or prosper, but wither and consume, till it be set right again: so the mystical body of Christ, can never *increase with the increase of God,* if either there be not a right Union of the joints to the head, or if that σύνδεσμος†, the ligament and bond that knits and fastens one member to another, be broken. Now this Union of the members, the Apostle saith is made by the *Ligament of Love*‡: which he therefore calls *the bond of perfection*§;

* Aug. *cont.* Don. *de bapt. L.* 3. *c.* 16.
† Col. ii. 19. ‡ Eph. iv. 3, 16.
§ Col. iii. 14.

because

because as it unites Church-members among themselves, so it is the cause, that they communicate mutual help, to the profit and preservation of the whole. The members of the Church, then, being made so loose, and set at such distance; so divided and distracted one from another, some hurried this way, and some that, it must needs argue that this bond is either quite broken, or much loosned. And if it be a truth (which Philosophers affirm) that every natural body desires no less its unity than its entity *; I see no reason why the spiritual and mystical body of Christ, the Church, should not in like manner desire its unity, since, if it be, and continue thus unhappily divided, it cannot long subsist in its entity. As a tottering wall of stones heaped up together, without mortar or binding, is easily shaken and thrown down: so must the Church be soon brought to ruine, if this distracting and dividing course be suffered and practised. By concord and good agreement among Christians the Church grows and is enlarged †: So by their discords and divisions it will in short time perish and come to nothing ‡.

* *Quodlibet corpus non minus appetit unitatem quam suam entitatem.*

† Act. ii. 43, 47. v. 12, 14.

‡ Mat. xii. 25. Gen. iv. 8. 2 Sam. iii. 1.

Say

Say I this onely? Or say not the brethren of the *Nonconformists* the same? "He that is not "the Son of peace, is not the Son of God (saith "Mr. *Baxter* *) all other sins destroy the Church "consequentially, but division and separation "demolish it directly. Building the Church is "but an orderly joining the materials; and "what then is disjoyning, but pulling down? "Believe not those to be the Church's friends, "that would cure and reform her, by cutting "her throat †." *Pro Ecclesia clamitant* (saith St. *Cyprian* of such) they cry out for the Church, but *contra Ecclesiam dimicant*, their practice is a fighting against the Church. And that, not by open and professed hostility, but by secret and unseen Policy. Their pretences are friendly, but their actions mischievous; their voice like *Jacob's*, but their hands like *Esau's*.

III. Thirdly, it hinders the *Communion of Saints*, that holy and sweet fellowship which all the Members of Christ's Church ought to have both with Christ their head, and each with other. When, in the natural body of man, the

* Baxter *ubi supra.*

† *Si in sinu meo natus, si uberum meorum lacte nutritus, adversus me gladium levas, redde quod dedi, & esto, si potes, aliter Christianus.* Hieronim. *advers. Luciferanos.* p. 493.

members

members are joined to the head, and one with another, they have by virtue of that Union, Communion also, and do impart blood, spirits, and life from one to the other: So in the mystical Body of Christ, the members being joined to the Lord, and one to another, there will be a sweet Communion among themselves in heart and affections, *joy with them that rejoice* *, and sorrow with *them that weep*, prayer each for, and each with other; *the multitude of them that believe will be of one heart, and one soul* †. Now one of the closest bonds of Union amongst Christians, is in their communicating together in holy duties. We are then most one, when *with one mind, and with one mouth, we glorifie God together* ‡. When holy *David* would set forth the greatest intireness of sacred friendship, he described it by *walking to the house of God in company together* §. The end and effect of our joint partaking in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is to seal up this Unity. As by one of the Sacraments, *we are baptized into one body*, so by the other *we are made to drink into one spirit* ‖. And therefore the Apostle, from our Communion together at the Lord's Table, concludes our Union one with another, and incorporation into

* Rom. xii. 15. † Act. iv. 32. ‡ Rom. xv. 6.
§ Ps. lv. 14. ‖ 1 Cor. xii. 13.

(not

(not the essential, but) the spiritual body of Christ. *We being many, are one bread, and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread**. A Father thus comments on that place. *Omnes unum corpus sumus in Christo, quia etsi multi sumus, unum tamen in eo sumus, omnes enim de uno pane participamus*†. We are therefore all one body in Christ, because, though we are many in ourselves, yet in him we are all one, for we all partake of one bread. *Nam si in humanis mensæ & salis communicatio, amoris causa est & signum, quanto magis id erit in communione mensæ & panis Domini?* If among men the communicating together at one table, and in one dish, is both a cause and sign of love; how much more then would it be so, in the communicating together at the Table, and of the bread of the Lord? Yea, the very assembling of Christians together in the Church, is, by St. *Chrysostome* called‡, *the Communion of Saints.*

That then which tends to make rents and parties in the Church, and divides Christians each from other, in external Conjunction of publick duties, as well as internal concord of hearts and affections (as the practice in question

* 1 Cor. x. 17.

† Cyril. *l.* 10. *c.* 13. *in* Johan.

‡ Chrys. *Serm. de Eucharist.*

hath

hath been proved, and by experience is found to doe) must needs hinder *the Communion of Saints*. Union being broken, there can be no Communion: for it flows from Union, (and is no other (in the Etymology of the word) than common Union. And as there is nothing that obstructs Christian Communion so much as divisions do, so, when once they are made, there is nothing more hard to be composed again. *A Brother offended, is harder to be won, than a strong City; and their contentions are like the barrs of a Castle* *.

For as no bond is so strong, as that of Religion; so no Hostility so cruel and outragious, as that which difference in Religion occasioneth. *Think not* (saith our Saviour) *that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword: for I am come to set a man at variance against his Father, and the Daughter against her Mother, and a man's foes shall be they of his own house* †. This is commonly through the policy of Satan, and malice of men, the fruit of divisions in point of Religion amongst Brethren.

And if the bond of Communion betwixt the members be broken, I see not, but that the bond of Union with Christ their head, must be

* Prov. xviii. 19. † Mat. x. 34—36.

broken also. How can they exist as members of Christ's body, which have left their coupling and conjunction, with the other members of the same? Neither they, nor those that cause it, can, in the judgment of St. *Austine*. *Ii qui a compage corporis membra alia avellere conantur, seipsos a Christi unitate separant* *. They that draw the members from Communion one with the other, do cut off themselves from their Union with Christ. *Impium enim & sacrilegum divortium est, eos qui in Christi veritate consentiunt distrahere* †. Saith *Calvin*, It is an impious and sacrilegious divorce, to divide those, who would otherwise agree in the truth of Christ. The same is acknowledged by the *Presbyterian* Divines. *If we be the body of Christ, do not they who separate from the body, separate from the head also* ‡? And by the unanimous consent of the ancient, godly, and learned *Nonconformists, in their grave and modest confutation of the errours of the Brownists and Separatists* §: where in the first words of their Book, they say, "That the Church of *England* is a true Church, "and such a one as from which, whosoever wit-

* Aug. *Tom.* 3. *de fid. ad* Pet. *Diac. cap.* 43.

† Calv. *Comment. in* Rom. 16, 17.

‡ *Vindicat. of Presbyt. pag.* 112, 113.

§ *Published by Mr.* William Rathbane *an. Dom.* 1644.

"tingly

" tingly and willingly separateth himself, cut-
" teth himself off from Christ." And they prove it at large by unanswerable arguments, in the following pages of their Book.

A præsumptione igitur illicitâ excusari nequeunt, qui nimis amando sententiam suam, usque ad præcidendæ communionis audaciam perveniunt *. They are therefore no way to be excused from sinfull presumption, who out of a fondness to their own opinion, proceed to that boldness and hardiness, as to interrupt Christian Communion. *Malunt nullam habere, quam non suam:* They had rather there should be no Religion at all, than that their own should not take place.

They that are any way instrumental to break unity, that true-Lovers knot which every Christian should wear in his breast all days of his life, will find at last by miserable experience, that destruction will follow it, if repentance precede not to prevent it. For, if the God whom we serve, be the *God of peace*, *Jesus Christ* our head and Saviour be the *Prince of peace*, the Spirit of Holiness, the *worker of peace*, the blessed Trinity, in Unity of Deity, *the authour of peace and lover of concord* (as our Church expresseth it) how then can it join it self with the disturbers of both, and not rather separate from

* Aug. *Tom.* 8. *de Baptist. cont. Don. c.* 5.

those which separate from their Brethren, and are instrumental to draw as many after them as they can?

IV. Fourthly, It gratifies (at least) two main sinfull Corruptions, to which people are naturally prone, both mentioned together by St. *Paul*, in one place.

The first is, their discontent with their own Pastors, who are regularly and orderly sent of God to them. *After their own lusts they will heap to themselves teachers* *.

1. The great fault here prophesied to be in the latter times, was, *heaping up many teachers.* One will not serve a peoples turn, but they must have a multitude. A woman that forsakes her Husband's bed, will be ready *to pour out her fornications to every one that passeth by*, and not content her self with the embraces of one single stranger alone, but be ready to prostitute her body to any one.

2. And there is an Emphasis in the word ἰαυτοῖς, to *themselves.* They will be their own chusers. They will not accept, nor submit to those, who by the hands of the Rulers of the Church, God shall place over them, but take to *themselves*, upon their own judgment and

* 2 Tim. iv. 3.

choice,

choice, whom they please. This is according to his opinion, who (expounding the word ἐπισωρεύω, used in this place by St. *Paul)* saith, *quod sine judicio, & temerè sunt collecturi doctores suos* * : They shall rashly gather together teachers of their own.

3. Διδασκάλους, Teachers: as they esteem and use them in contradistinction to Pastours; for they will not admit of any to have a pastoral rule and care over them, but *teachers* to tickle their Ears, and please their fancies. And which is yet worse,

4. Κατὰ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τὰς ἰδίας, *according to their own Lusts.* Such as do best please their humours; such as are of the same party with themselves, that are in opposition to that which themselves oppose. *Beza* interprets it thus, *prout hoc vel illud illis arriserit:* as this or that best pleaseth them.

The second is, the *itch of the ear.* φιλοκαινία, a disease very common, yet never so Epidemical, as in these days. And there are two things, that very much stir and provoke this humour.

1. *Novelty.* If the thing, either for the matter, or the manner of it, be new and strange, our *Athenian* dispositions will soon incline us *to spend our whole time in it* †. Let a *Physician* be

* Leigh *in crit. Sac.* † Act. xvii. 21.

never

never so learned, honest, experienced, and successfull in his place, yet if but an *Empirick* or *Mountebank* come into the Country, and set up his Stage, though he doeth nothing but put off deceitfull and Sophisticate Drugs, and takes mens money, yet he shall not want at all times a full resort to him, because he is a new-comer, and his pretended method and means of cure, are new and unusual. In Religion also, people are naturally φιλόκαινοι, apt to be led away with insatiable desire of hearing new men and new things, and *listen rather to fables than to wholesome words that are according to godliness* *: rather admire and adore the new conceits of every *Novellist*, than receive the great mysteries of Salvation in love of the truth, from him, whom God hath set to watch over their Souls. *Mitte quod scio, dic quod nescio*, is their *Motto;* we have heard this man long enough, our Ears itch now to attend to some other; what we know is stale, things fresh and unheard do better please us. It is not the word, but the man they desire to hear. And therein they shew themselves to be the most observant disciples of the great Masters of errour and deceipt, the *Papists:* For this is a Doctrine taught by *Stapleton* † in the

* 2 Tim. iv. 4.

† Stap. *lib.* 1. *de Doct. princ. cap.* 5.

tenth of his *quodlibets, non quid loquitur, sed quis, à bono Catholico attendendum est.* A good Catholick ought not to regard what is spoken, but who it is that speaks. And if the speaker prove a ματαιόλογος, and stuff up his discourse with idle and impertinent stories, how fabulous soever, he shall find more attention and applause, from such humorous hearers *, than he that with greatest evidence of the spirit and power, makes known *the Oracles of God.* But certainly that man is under a very great distemper of body, that grows weary of his good ordinary food. The stomach is very sickly, when it cannot take in any solid meat, but the fancy is still working after rarities. And if ever that person recover his former health he will find, that his body will never hold to be in better temper, than when he keeps to his ordinary Diet.

2. *Prohibition* by Authority. Things denied, are always most desired, and the enjoyment of them is therefore the sweeter, because restrained by Law.

Audax omnia perpeti
Gens humana ruit per vetitum nefas †.

* *Apud quos de humano arbitratu divinitas pensitatur, nisi homini Deus placuerit, Deus non erit, homo jam Deo propitius esse debebit.* Tertull. *Apol. cap.* 5.

† Horat. *carm. lib.* 1.

Ever

Ever since our first parents transgressed in eating the forbidden fruit, all the sinfull posterity of *Adam*, are ready to run most dangerous adventures for a taste of that, which they should not touch. How just and reasonable soever the prohibition is, yet it will allways be looked on with a jealous Eye, by those that are concerned in it, as if there were a more than ordinary excellency in the thing denyed; and it were therefore kept from us by our Superiours (though they mean us never so much good in it) because they envy us the enjoyment of it. Whence it comes to pass, that (as beasts) though their own pasture be never so good, yet if they are bounded in, they cannot contain themselves, but will adventure to leap the hedge, that they may goe farther, though they fare worse.

Were it so that the doors of our Churches were shut up by Authority, People forbidden to resort thither, or to attend the Ministry of their own Pastours any more, and commanded to frequent the private meetings of strangers onely; then would these People be soon weary of their restraint, and pretend great zeal to God's house, and *the place where his honour dwells*, then would their Souls seem to long, and even to *faint within them, for the Courts of the Lord, to see his Power and his Glory, so as they have seen it in his Sanctuary:* Then would they seem to account their

own

own Ministers *worthy of double honour, to receive them in the Lord with all gladness, and to hold them in reputation.* Oh the strange nature of the Sons of men, to whom a Legal prohibition is a forcible invitation, that know not the worth of Mercies but by the loss of them!

Fifthly, it alienates the affections of People from the true worship of God established by Law in our Church; shakes the minds of the weak, and begets even in those who have professed, they have not the least exception against it, but suspect somewhat amiss in it onely upon this ground, because they see others (of whose judgments they have a good confidence) withdraw from it, and chuse rather to frequent private meetings than to serve God in the publick Congregations. Who have not heard the railings and revilings that have proceeded out of the mouths of those, who are the favourers, and followers of these unlawfull Assemblies, against the Book of Common-prayer? And who may not observe, their constant and studyed withdrawing from the use of it? *That* book, which

1. For the Authours and Compilers of it, was composed by the most Learned and Holy Doctours, Martyrs and Confessours, that the Church of *England* ever had; who spent their times, studies, and lives in opposing the Idolatry and Superstí-

Superstition of the *Romish* Church: Set forth at first, in the Reign, and by the Authority of King *Edward* the Sixth, who for his Piety, Zeal, Learning and Wisedom, was accounted the miracle of nature. *Peter Martyr*, in an Oration of his at *Argentine*, saith thus of his death; *Præter omnem spem acerbâ & luctuosâ morte sublatus est Edvardus Angliæ Rex, Monarcharum Christiani orbis candidum Lumen, pietatis Legitimus alumnus, & Evangelii Christi propugnator acerrimus* *. Besides all expectation *Edward* King of *England* is taken away by lamentable and cruel Death, who was the clear light of all the Monarchs of the Christian World, the true Son of Piety, and the most zealous and earnest Defender and Maintainer of the Gospel of Christ. And in an Oration of his at *Tigurum*, he gives this Testimony of him; *Obiit proh dolor, obiit Edvardus ille sanctissimus Rex, quo adolescente nescio an Sol doctiorem pro ætate, sanctiorem atque prudentiorem usquam viderit* †. The most Holy King *Edward* is dead, and I know not whether the Sun ever saw a more Learned for his age, and a more sanctified and wise Prince. And again in an Epistle to Queen *Elizabeth*, speaking of the zeal and care of several godly and religious Kings in reforming Religion, and

* Peter Martyr, *Loc. com. pag.* 741. *Col.* 1. † *Ib.* 745.

establish-

establishing the true Worship of God, saith, *Hoc frater tuus Edvardus Angliæ Rex præclarissimus, pro viribus, & sane præ quam ejus ætas pateretur, facere studuit, cujus regnum diutius extrahi, peccata nostra & ingratitudo intolerabilis non siverunt; eximias illius adolescentis virtutes, & egregiam pietatem, Deus orbi tantum ostendere voluit, deinde ut nos, quemadmodum mala nostra merita exigebant, aliquantulum castigaret, illum e terra citius ad se revocavit* *. The same your brother *Edward* the most renowned King of *England* did study, to the utmost of his Power, and beyond what his age would permit, to doe: whose reign, our sins and most intolerable ingratitude would not suffer to continue longer over us. God onely would shew to the World the singular virtues and most excellent Piety of that young man, and then, to correct us as our evil deservings did require, he soon recalled him from this World to himself. Judicious Mr. *Hooker* calls him *Edward the Saint, in whom it pleased God, righteous and just, to let* England *see what a blessing, sin and iniquity would not suffer it to enjoy* †. This rare and most excellent person God raised up to see this Book composed,

* Peter Mart. *Loc. com. pag.* 788.

† Hooker. *Eccles. polit. l.* 4. *sect.* 14.

to

to establish it by regal Authority, and then he was taken to his Crown of Glory.

2. " For the matter contained in that Book * " Sober and Learned men have sufficiently vin- " dicated it, against the cavils and exceptions " of those, who thought it a part of Piety, to " make what prophane objections they could " against it; especially for Popery and Super- " stition. Whereas no doubt the Liturgy was " exactly conformed to the Doctrine of the " Church of *England*, and this, by all reformed " Churches is confessed to be most sound and " orthodox." It casts out all false Doctrine and Worship, and is, of it self, sufficient to confute a *Papist*, and other the Enemies of the *Protestant* Religion. It is fitted for all occasions and uses of the Church, and comprehends the whole Duty of a Christian, both for the *credendis*, contained in the Confessions of Faith; the *faciendis*, in the ten Commandments; and the *petendis*, in the Lord's Prayer, and others framed thereby.

3. For the Confirmation of it; it stands ratified and enjoined by the Laws, Statutes, and Sovereign Authority of five most prudent and pious Persons immediately (Queen *Mary* a Papist

* Basil. *p.* 90.

onely

onely interposing) succeeding one the other on the *English* Throne: sealed and confirmed by the bloud of so many Martyrs, that suffered in those *Marian* days, shortly after the composure of it, and so written in the bloud of those that compiled it.

4. For the approbation of it; it is commended and allowed by the best Divines of the reformed Churches, both at home and abroad. Such as *Cranmer, Tayler, Ridley, Jewel, Calvin, Bucer,* and many others.

5. Touching God's acceptance and owning of it, the History of ages past, and the strange providence of God, in relation to the framing, preserving, blessing and restoring it, do so evidently declare this, that he seems to be very much darkned in his mind with prejudice, that can deny or gainsay it. "Which grace and fa-
"vour of Divine assistence, having not in one
"thing or two shewed it self, nor for some few
"days or years appeared, but in such sort so
"long continued, our manifold sins and trans-
"gressions striving to the contrary; what can
"we less thereupon conclude, than that God
"would at leastwise by tract of time teach the
"World, that the thing which he blesseth, de-
"fendeth, keepeth so strongly, cannot chuse
"but be of him? Wherefore if any refuse to
"believe

" believe us disputing for it, let him believe God " himself thus miraculously working for it*."

What I have said in commendation of this book, amounts to no more than what the reverend Divines of the *Presbyterian* perswasion, have been constrained to say of it, even then, when they were to make all the exceptions they could against it. They say, " We have an high, " an honourable esteem of those Godly and " Learned Bishops, and others, who were the " Compilers of the publick Liturgy; and do " look on it as an excellent and worthy work †." 'Tis true, they add [*for that time* —] But these words seem to me, no way to abate or detract from the acknowledged *excellency* and *worth* of it. For, if it were an *excellent* and *worthy work* then, what hinders, but that it is so now? Wherein doth the *excellency* and *worthiness* of any form of God's worship at any time consist, but in its Conformity to the Scriptures, which is the rule and measure of Divine worship at all times? It could never be *excellent* and *worthy*, that was at any time unlawfull; and it could have been no otherwise, had it been contrary to God's word. And they that shall impartially reade the History, and seriously consider the

* Hook. *Eccles. Polit. l.* 4. *s.* 14.

† *Account of proceedings. p.* 1, 2.

profound

profound Learning, clear Light, admirable Piety, incomparable Zeal, Purity, Patience, Loyalty, and all other Christian Graces and Virtues, which did shine forth in those renowned Fathers and Martyrs, the Compilers of that book, cannot without blushing arrogate to themselves greater and higher attainments, than they had. Are the men of this age the onely *Children of the light*, and were those Worthies (one of whom prophetically said to his fellow-sufferer at the stake *, *We shall this day light such a Candle by God's Grace in* England, *as I trust, shall never be put out)* but in the mist of Popish ignorance and superstition, in comparison of us now? Rather, I think, they ought to be acknowledged men extraordinarily filled with the Spirit of God: *Light and understanding and sound wisedom was found in them, and in nothing did they come behind the very chiefest* Servants of God in this generation. We allow and confess them to have been men, not onely profound in Learning, but *sound in the faith,* Orthodox in judgment, yea, the great assertours of the *Protestant* Religion, and glorious instruments in the hands of God, of causing that light of truth to break out of darkness, by which we now walk, and which we all profess. How is it then, that they who

* Mr. Latimer *Act. & Mon.* T. 3. *p.* 503.

spent

spent all their time, studies, and strength in opposing the Idolatry and Superstition of the *Romish* Church, and *loved not their lives unto death*, but *were slain for the word of God, and testimony which they held*, should be thought to retain any thing of Popish superstition in worship? What is this, but *to condemn the generation of God's Children* *, which cannot be well pleasing to their Father?

But what if it should be proved that the Liturgy of our Church, was (for the substance of it) in use, in the very first and purest times of the Church of Christ, before ever Popish Superstition came into the World? Then, I hope, it will be acknowledged to be free from that, whereof it is secretly and most ignorantly charged. But Godly and Learned *Cranmer* in Queen *Mary*'s days (who knew well what he said, and was well able to make his words good,) offers to enter the lists with any *Papist* living (for it had no other Enemy in those days, neither hath it in these, but such as fight with their weapons, and sharpen their instruments against it, at their forge.) And (if the Queens Highness would grant thereunto) "prove against "all that will say the contrary, that all that is "contained in the Holy Communion, set out

* Ps. lxxiii. 15.

"by

" by the most innocent and godly King *Edward*
" VI. in his high Court of *Parliament*, is con-
" formable to that order which our Saviour
" Christ did both observe, and command to be
" observed, and which the Apostles and primi-
" tive Church used many years. And that if
" he might be permitted to take to himself
" *Peter Martyr*, and four or five others, whom
" he should chuse, they would, by God's Grace,
" take upon them to defend, not onely the
" Common-prayers of the Church, the minis-
" tration of the Sacraments, and other the rites
" and ceremonies, but also all the Doctrine and
" Religion set out by the said King *Edward* VI,
" to be more pure and according to God's word,
" than any other that have been used in *Eng-*
" *land* these thousand years, so that God's word
" may be judge. And that the Order of the
" Church set out at that present in the Realm
" by Act of *Parliament*, is the same that was
" in the Church fifteen hundred years past *."
Neither saith he it alone, but we have the several testimonies of particular Learned and judicious Saints of that and the following generation, touching the *excellency* and *worth* of that Book; such as *Saunders*, *Taylor*, *Ridley*, *Jewel*, &c. We have a *Noble Army of Martyrs* standing

* *Act. & Mon. T.* 3. *pag.* 94.

together in vindication of the purity of it. The whole blessed company of persecuted Preachers, in Prison, at the beginning of Queen *Mary*'s Reign, in a petition of theirs to the *King*, *Queen* and *Parliament*, say thus "If your said Sub-"jects be not able by the Testimony of Christ, "his Prophets, Apostles, and Godly Fathers of "his Church, to prove that the Doctrine of the "Church, Homilies, and *Service book*, taught "and set forth in the time of our late most "godly Prince King *Edward* VI. is the true "Doctrine of Christ's Catholick Church, and "most agreeable with the Articles of the Chris-"tian faith; your said subjects offer themselves "then, to the most heavy punishment that it "shall please your Majesty to appoint*."

Should but one *Nonconformist* have said so much, for the *antiquity* and *purity* of this Book, it would sooner have been believed by the people of our age, than from the mouths of so many learned and holy Fathers. Take therefore the testimony of one of that way, and a learned one, Mr. *John Ball*, who having spent great pains in quitting it from the objections of *Separatists*, lays down this conclusion. "Our "Service-book is not a Translation of the *Mass*, "but a restitution of the ancient Liturgy, where-

* *Act. & Mon. T. 3. P.* 119.

"in

" in sundry Prayers are inserted, used by the " Fathers, agreeable to the Scriptures *." And in the same Chapter in a few pages after, he hath these words. " To the praise of God be " it spoken, our Liturgy for purity and sound- " ness, may compare with any Liturgy used in " the third and fourth Ages of the Church. †." Which was long before Popery came into the World.

Neither hath any of the several *emendations* that it hath admitted, since its first composure, been of that nature or moment as to give an occasion to charge it in the least with any thing that is, or was, sinfull or Superstitious. However thus much, I suppose, may unquestionably be concluded from the abovesaid acknowledgment; that if it were an *excellent and worthy work* then, it is not sinfull now: but the use of it being enjoyned by Authority, may be conformed to with a good Conscience. Especially considering, that it is farther acknowledged by the Divines first named, " That what things " soever are offensive to them in it, and desired " to be removed, are not of the foundation of " Religion, nor the essentials of publick Wor- " ship; and must therefore be but circumstan-

* *Trial of Grounds tending to Separation, c. 9. p. 155, 156.*
† *Page 176.*

"tials*." Which ought to be the more easily born with in complyance with Lawfull Authority, by all such as mind their own duty, or tender the peace of the Church †; it being a good and safe rule which St. *Augustine* gives in such a case. *Quod neque contra Fidem, neque contra bonos mores injungitur, indifferenter est habendum, & pro eorum inter quos vivitur societate servandum est* ‡. Whatsoever is enjoined, that is not contrary to Faith or Holiness, ought to be observed for peace-sake with them, among whom we live.

Yet how is this Book called to the stake, by the upholders and frequenters of Conventicles, and made to fill up, what was behind of the sufferings of those holy Fathers, that compiled it! How often have I heard it call'd by some of them *Popery, Idolatry, Superstition,* and what not! How are they accounted the onely *Virtuoso's* in these days, and to have attained to a very high pitch of Piety, when they have onely arrived at such a measure of profaneness, as to rail at it, and carefully to shun their joining with us, in the Worship of God by it; and

* *Account of proceedings. page* 11.

† *Or as Dr.* Owen *in his plea for Nonconformists, p.* 9. *saith, they differ from us onely in significant fringes and laces of Forms and Ceremonies.*

‡ Aug. *ad* Jan. *Epist.* 118.

think

think that they have then done him a very acceptable service, when they have done him none at all, but onely afforded their presence at the Preaching of a Sermon? And to the end that malice may leave nothing unattempted to render it contemptible, I have observed, that these sinfull Assemblies are studiously continued till the end of Common Prayer in the Church, at least; if not during the Sermon also.

Could it ever have been thought, that men who pretend Religion and Conscience, could have proceeded to such a monstrous extremity of wickedness, as to prefer their own private humours and fancies, before God's publick Worship? And thus endeavour to undermine and destroy so godly and legal an Establishment? If confession of Sin, profession of Faith, reading of the Scriptures, Prayers and Praise to God (which is the substance of this whole Book) be any part of God's Ordinance or Worship, then surely the practice of these men, is contrary not onely to Gospel order and commands, but even to those Rules of Worship, which the principal men of their own way and perswasion have given. For in the *Directory* composed by the late *Assembly of Divines*, the first direction for publick Worship which they give, is this, "When the Congregation is to meet for pub-"lick Worship, the people (having before pre-

pared

"pared their hearts thereunto) ought all to "come and join therein; not absenting them- "selves from the publick Ordinances through "negligence, or, *upon pretence of Private meet-* "*ings**."

How are the mouths of *Papists* hereby opened against us, to justifie their own *Recusancy*, and to condemn our Church as false and adulterate, seeing that our own members do revile it (as they of the *Romish* Church also do, calling it *an abominable Book, very pestiferous* †, &c. the service of *Baal* ‡, plain Idolatry) separate themselves from it, join hands with them to destroy it, and are contented to hazard their Estates and fortunes, rather than to conform to it? Doth not this harden them in their *Superstition* and *Idolatry*, avert them from our Church, and make them *sit down in the scorners chair?* Doth not this say (in effect) that all those good laws formerly made against *Papists*, and all penalties and mulcts by virtue thereof inflicted, were most unjust, in punishing them for refusing to join with us in that form of worship, which we our selves cannot approve of? We may say with the *Athenians*, *Auximus Philippum nos ipsi*

* *Directory. page* 1.

† *Act. & Mon. Tom.* 3. *p.* 19, 138, *&* 1012.

‡ *Rhemist. annotat. in* 1 Cor. vi. 14. *&* 1 Cor. x. 9.

Athenienses,

Athenienses, We have strengthned the hands of our Enemies against us, by our own divisions and contentions. It is an odious quality, and that which obscures the lustre of all the commendable vertues which *Franzius** notes of the *Cranes,* that oftentimes they are so vehemently enraged one with an other, and maintain such a combate among themselves, that they neither observe, nor fear the coming of the *Fowler;* yea, that they rather desire his approach, and to be taken by him, than to be reconciled to their mates, with whom they are faln out. It is a thing much to be feared, that these men will never be at quiet and peace in the Church, untill they make that true of themselves which I have read objected to the aforesaid people of *Athens* by way of reproach, *that they would never vouchsafe to treat or hear of peace, but in mourning gowns, namely, after the loss of their friends and fortunes in the wars.* He hath no mind that considers not this, nor heart that condoles it not.

Put the case, that though the Liturgy of our Church was composed with so much piety and prudence, yet there might remain any thing capable of amendment, as a freckle in a fair Face what if it be not in all things suitable with every

* Franzius *Hist. Animal. pag.* 321, 322.

man's

man's judgment or fancy (as there is nothing in the world, the *Directory* it self not excepted, so well done, that doth not displease some: the best cook'd dishes please not every Palate) yet as St. *Augustine* of old answered the *Donatists*, *Si peccavit Cæcilianus non ideo hæreditatem suam perdidit Christus* *. Shall God therefore loose his publick worship and service, shall it be trampled upon, slighted, and prophanely neglected, because we differ about black and white, as *Bishop Ridley* told *Bishop Hooper* in a Letter to him?

And though in these latter days, preaching hath gotten ground of the Prayers of the Church, in the opinion of some whom we shall see present now and then at the former, but seldom or never at the latter: yet (without any detraction to that excellent ordinance of God be it spoken) this most despised part of God's worship must needs be granted to have the preheminence of the other (especially in these days, wherein the Church is so maturely composed and throughly setled in the faith, and the Book of the holy Scriptures so complete and common amongst us in our own Language) by him that considers,

1, First, that it is the most proper and immediate worship of God, and preaching but

* Aug. *Epist.* 50.

mediate,

mediate, as it is the means which God hath ordained to teach men how to pray, and to fit them for that duty. For, *how can they call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him, of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher*?*

2. Secondly, it is a duty simply and entirely moral, good in respect of its own nature and quality, before any external constitution passed upon it, and may be resolved into one of the dictates and principles of the Law of Nature, imprinted universally in the hearts of all men at the creation. For before the Law of the ten Commandments *men began to call on the name of the Lord†;* as being taught by the light of Nature, that in God *we all live, move and have our being;* and that he is *the Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift.* But preaching and hearing are acknowledged by all; to be instituted worship, and moral onely by an external imposition and mandate of the Supreme Lawgiver.

3. Thirdly, it is a duty of longer duration than preaching: the one being onely for this life; the other, for the life to come also: the one proper and peculiar to men as members of

* Rom. x. 14. † Gen. iv. 26.

the

the Church militant, the other common to men and Angels, in the Church triumphant. "The "knowledge is small which we have on Earth, "concerning things done in Heaven: notwith- "standing thus much we know, even of Saints "in Heaven, that they pray *."

4. Fourthly, it is a duty of larger extent and benefit than Preaching is; this onely profiteth those that be present, that do hear it and attend upon it, but Prayer is available even for those that are far distant, yea though they be in the remotest parts of the world. When *Lot*'s preaching did no good at all to his hearers, yet *Abraham*'s prayers might have been so effectual as to have saved five wicked Cities, if there had been but ten righteous persons in them.

What our Blessed Saviour's judgment was in this case, we may easily gather by that place in the Gospel, where he calls the Church οἶκος προσευχῆς, *an house of Prayer*, not of *Preaching*. Whence in the Primitive times all the Christian Temples were called and known by the name of Εὐκτήρια, *Oratories*.

And publick Prayers of the Church have as much the preheminence of private, as the duty it self, hath of preaching, in regard there is more force in these Prayers, wherein the whole

* Hook. *Eccles. polit. l.* 5. *Sect.* 23.

Church

Church joyn together as one man *, than there can be in those, that others, though never so many, make apart any where else. *I say unto you* (saith our Saviour) *that if two of you shall agree on Earth, touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven* †. Much more then if a Thousand; and more if the whole Church. They are two excellent and remarkable sayings of St. *Chrysostome* to this purpose, which are quoted by *Bishop Jewel* ‡ in his reply to *Harding*'s answer. *Non æque exoras cum solus dominum obsecras, atque cum fratribus tuis. Est enim in hoc plus aliquid, videlicet concordia, conspiratio, copula amoris, & charitatis, & sacerdotum clamores. Præsunt enim ob eam rem sacerdotes, ut populi orationes, quæ infirmiores per se sunt, validiores eas complexæ simul in cælum evehantur* §. Thou dost not so soon obtain thy desire when thou prayest alone unto the Lord, as when thou prayest with thy Brethren; for herein is somewhat more, the concord, the consent, the joyning of love and charity, and the cry of the Priest. For to that end the Priests are made overseers, that they being the stronger sort, may

* *Vis unita fortior.* † Mat. xviii. 19.

‡ Pag. 215.

§ Chrysost. *de incomprehensib. Dei natura.* Hom. 3.

take

take with them the weaker Prayers of the People and carry them up into Heaven. Again he saith. *Quod quis apud seipsum precatus accipere non poterit, hoc cum multitudine precatus accipiet. Quare? Quia etiamsi non propria virtus, tamen concordia multum potest* *. The thing that a man cannot obtain by himself alone, praying together with the multitude, he shall obtain; and why so? for although not his own worthiness, yet concord and unity prevaileth much. When the whole Church joyned together in their devotions for St. *Peter*'s enlargment, Omnipotence exerted it self in a series of Miracles † that their Prayers should not be unanswered. *Tunc est efficacior & sanatior devotio, quando in operibus pietatis totius ecclesiæ unus est animus, & unus est sensus* ‡. Prayer is then more holy and effectual, when in the works of piety there is but one mind and one meaning of the whole Church. Besides, God hath promised (as hath been before shewed) to be more comfortably present in our *Church-Assemblies*, than in any other houses or places whatsoever. If it had been all one to pray in a private house, or in the publick assemblies of the Church, St. *Paul*, and the Godly

* Chrysost. *in* 2 *ad Thes.* Hom. 4.

† Act. xii. 5. *&c.*

‡ Leo *Serm.* 4. *de Jejunio Septimi mensis.*

Christians

Christians with him, would never have put themselves to an hazard of their lives, in times of hottest persecution, by meeting together in multitudes, in a place *where there was an House of Prayer;* or *where they were wont to assemble together to pray* *. For it is read both ways. The first pleaseth *Tremelius* best; the latter, *Beza.* προσευχὴ *enim, & orationem & oratorium significat* †. The word signifies both *Prayer,* and an *House of Prayer.* "The House of "Prayer is a Court beautified with the presence "of celestial powers, there the Almighty doth "sit to hear, and his Angels intermingle with "us, as our associates, and attend to further "our Suits. With reference hereunto the Apostle "requires so great care to be had of decency in "the Church, for the Angels sake; saith Mr. "*Hooker* ‡."

VI. Sixthly, it begets ill thoughts of his Majesty's most gracious Government, as if he were a persecutor and suppressor of true Religion, and an enemy to piety and godliness. These meetings about in Barnes, and private Houses, look not as if we lived under a Christian Protestant Prince, as if King *Charles* were upon

* Act. xvi. 13. † Cornel. A Lapid.
‡ Hook. *Eccles. polit. l.* 5. *Sect.* 25.

the

the throne; but as if *Nero, Dioclesian,* or *Queen Mary* were alive again, and did rule. "Con-"venticles* (saith *Bishop Lake)* make shew as "if you had not freedom of Religion, and "thereby you derogate from the honour of the "King's most Christian Government, and wrong "your Pastour, casting imputation upon him, "that he cannot, or will not instruct you as he "ought." And indeed it lays the Axe to the Root, and tends to the undermining and destruction of all Government and Governours. Do not the Histories of all Ages give in evidence to the evil tendency of these private, seditious, and unlawfull meetings? In the late years of war and confusion, those meetings were effectually made use of, by all parties, as the great Engine, to pull down the powers then in being. By these means *Presbytery* did in a great measure prevail to the forceable and irregular throwing down of the legally established *Episcopacy.* So by the same means *Independency, Anabaptism, Fifth-monarchism* hath been prevalent over and against *Presbytery.* So that it is a wonder the Governours of our Church and State have not a more watchfull and jealous Eye, upon all such illegal, Schismatical, and seditious conventions. It is a sure rule of our Saviour, *A Kingdom di-*

* *Bishop* Lake *Serm. on* 1 Tim. ii. 11.

vided

vided cannot stand *. It was a principle of *Machiavel, divide, & impera*, divide, and take all. Whatsoever may be divided, may be destroyed. When a society is broken, it may soon be brought to confusion. 'Tis Satan's way to destroy, by dissolving unions. *Infirma est securitas ab alienis dissidiis, nec unquam stabile est regnum, ubi inter se discordant ii, qui reguntur* †. This practice then that tends so much to dividing, tends as much to destroying both Church and State.

VII. Seventhly,-Where this liberty is either taken or given, there is, or may be, dissenting from, yea contrariety of Doctrine to what is taught in publick. And that can no way conduce to edification in faith and holiness, but to the greatest confusion that may be.

The whole Church should be, as the whole World was in *Noah*'s time, *unius labii*, of one Language, the building else will prove to be but a *Babel*, and the Ministry *for destruction, and not for edification* ‡; which is so far from being God's Ordinance, that it is quite contrary thereunto. This made St. *Paul* so earnestly to im-

* Mat. xii. 25.

† *Casp. Sibel in* Ps. 133, P. 597.

‡ 2 Cor. xiii. 10.

portune

portune the Church of *Corinth, to speak all the same things* *. And truly such is the condition of the Upholders and Masters of these unlawfull Assemblies in these days, that there is great danger of their prevarication now and then in Doctrine, and of suiting their discourses to their hearers palates. I say they are under a very great temptation to gratifie mens vices, by indulging their prejudices. For, as a worthy *Prelate* of our Church hath well observed †

"Where Ministers depend upon voluntary be-
"nevolences, if they do but upon some just
"reproof gaul the conscience of a guilty hearer,
"or preach some truth, which disrelisheth the
"Palate of a prepossessed auditour, he streight-
"way flies out, and not onely withdraws his own
"pay, but the contribution of others also. So
"as the free Tongue teacher, must either live
"by air, or be forced to change his Pasture.
"Thereupon it is that those *Sportulary Preа-*
"*chers* are fain to sooth up their many Masters,
"and are so gagged with the fear of starving
"displeasure, that they dare not be free in the
"reprehension of the daring sins of their un-
"certain benefactors, as being charmed to speak
"either *placentia*, or nothing."

* 1 Cor. i. 10.

† *Bishop* Hall *resolv. of decis.* Pag. 191, 132.

This

This is a truth easie to be apprehended. For if even when the Laws enforce men to pay their dues to their Ministers, they yet continue so backward in the discharge of them (especially if never so little displeased at just reproofs, and lawfull endeavours to reform their vicious lives) how much less hope can there be, that being left to their own free choice, they will prove liberal or bountifull in their voluntary Contributions, if never so little cross'd upon the like occasion by their new Masters.

VIII. Lastly, it opens a door to all Errours and Heresies, and is the ready way to bring all Religion to nothing. For (saith the Apostle) when people *heap up to themselves teachers, to satisfie the itch of their Ears, they will turn away their Ears from the truth, and shall be turned to fables in a short time**. Elsewhere the Holy Ghost joins *order* and *stedfastness* together. *Though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I present with you in the spirit, joying to behold your order and stedfastness of your faith in Christ* †. *It is impossible for men to be stedfast in Religion, who keep not God's order.* How come so many in our days to fall from their stedfastness, some to *Anabaptism*, some to *Quakerism*, and some to

* 2 Tim. iv. 3, 4. † Col. ii. 5.

Atheism, but by breaking first that order in Religion, that God hath set? If Souldiers in an Army keep their order, every one abiding in his proper place, and to his proper employment and command, they are invincible: but when once they begin to break their Ranks, they are soon after vanquished and destroyed.

If liberty may be taken or given to such private House-preaching in another man's Parish, why may not a *Jesuit* that preacheth *Purgatory*, *Invocation* of *Saints*, *Worshipping* of *Images*, and such like *Popish stuff* doe the like? Nay, it is a truth too well known, that there are some of them under the notion of *Nonconformists* that doe so: And in sundry places of this Nation, some such have been discovered, and more may, were they carefully sought after.

I am sure it *strengthens the hands of the wicked*; it justifieth and encourageth the *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, and all other *Sectaries*, (who in a Book put forth at the beginning of the long Parliament, called, *The Compassionate Samaritan* *, desire that the Parliament would stop all proceedings against them: and for the future provide, that as well particular and private Congregations, as publick, may have protection from them) in all their unjust and prophane separa-

* Pag. 75, 76.

tions

tions from our Churches, and sinfull and unlawfull Conventicles, which none have been more zealous and forward to condemn and suppress, than those men that now tread in their steps, and doe the same thing which they have disallowed and opposed in others.

All which things considered, every faithfull Pastour of a Congregation where such Intruders thrust themselves, may say to their people, as St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians* *, *Though yee have ten thousand instructers, yet ye have not many Fathers, for I have begotten you through the Gospel.* And, *If I be not an Apostle to others, yet doubtless I am to you, for the seal of mine Apostleship are ye in the Lord* †. And all such people as content not themselves with the labours of their pious and painfull Pastours, but run after Strangers and Usurpers, may justly fear that curse: *Thus saith the Lord unto the people, Thus have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet; therefore the Lord doth not accept them, he will now remember their iniquities, and visit their sins* ‡. For, *as a bird that wandreth from his nest, so is a man that wandreth from his place* §. God took a special care that the Bird *sitting over her Eggs, in her*

* 1 Cor. iv. 15. † Ib. ix. 2.
‡ Jer. xiv. 10. § Prov. xxvii. 8.

SOCIETY OF WRITERS TO THE SIGNET